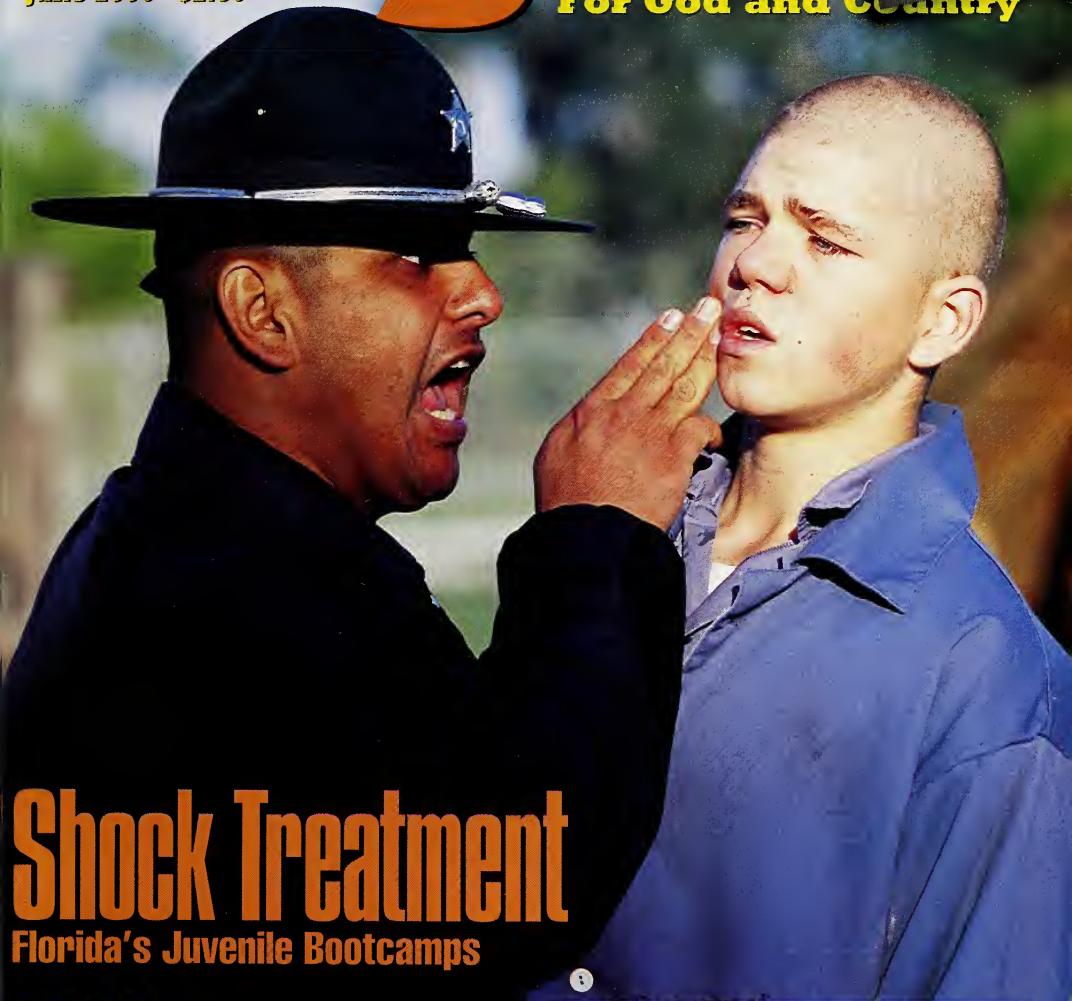


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For God and Country

Vol. 148, No. 6

The Magazine for a Strong America

JUNE 2000

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COVER A Florida deputy sheriff, in the role of a drill instructor, "welcomes" a juvenile to Florida's boot camp. Tom Stratman photo

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE, a leader among national general-interest publications, is published monthly by The American Legion for its 2.6 million readers. These wartime veterans, working through nearly 15,000 community-level Posts, dedicate themselves to God and Country and traditional American values; strong national security; adequate and compassionate care for veterans, their widows and orphans; community service; and the wholesome development of our nation's youths.



10



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Robinson is a Real Hero

After reading the article about David Robinson ("David the Goliath," April), I read it aloud to my wife. His answers overwhelmed me. Too often we read about young people only when they have done something wrong. Here is a young and successful athlete who has both feet on the ground (except when playing basketball), is a great role model for today's youth and, more importantly, is a very good family man.

Thank you for giving us non-basketball fans a glimpse of David Robinson and the type of man he is.

—David J. Markham, Erie, Pa.

Robinson Right on Flag

The article on David Robinson was very interesting ("David the Goliath," April). I applaud him for the stand he has taken on the constitutional amendment to protect our flag.

—Robert E. "Ed" Self,
Smithfield, N.C.

People Thwarted Again

With the defeat of the flag-protection amendment, once again the people's will has been blocked by senators who think they know better. They actually do work for us, even if they don't seem to believe it. The list of senators who voted "nay" is revealing. (See page 48.)

In agreement with National Commander Al Lance Jr., I will not go away. I will not give up and will continue to support the amendment. We must continue our fight and stand together as we have for the past 11 years.

—Gordon R. Schneider,
Deer Park, Texas

Army Was There, Too

In the April issue, Dan Allsup mentions that the Marines fought the battle of the Chosin Reservoir ("Remembering the Korean War"). There were also a lot of U.S. Army personnel fighting and dying in that battle. The Army units that fought in that battle have just re-



U.S. NAVY

cently been awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

—Norma Strickbine, Thayer, Mo.

Bohannon Right on Mark

Thank you for the excellent article by Jim Bohannon on Vietnam ("Vietnam: We Could Have Won. We Should Have Won," April). Having served as an infantry platoon leader, I believe he hit the nail on the head.

We did not lose the war — our political leaders quit the war. Our political leaders did not have the courage to stand up against the news media and support an all-out effort in Vietnam. American fighting men did not lose one major battle there.

The American public, misled by slanted journalism, conveniently looked the other way in the name of peace. I will always be proud of my service and the men with whom I served.

—Evan Francis, Madison, Ohio

We Didn't Lose in Vietnam

I just read two articles in the April issue ("Vietnam: We Could Have Won. We Should Have Won," and "Defying the Odds at An Loc"). Both seem to have

WE WANT YOUR OPINIONS

The American Legion Magazine welcomes letters concerning articles that appear in the publication. Letter writers are also encouraged to submit photographs of themselves for possible publication with their letters. Be sure to include your hometown and daytime phone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing. Send your opinions to:

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a relatively defeatist attitude about the ending of the war. I remember the ending a little differently.

The Paris peace agreements acknowledged the fact that in January 1973, North Vietnam was in deep trouble. At that point our military had the war won, closed our involvement in it and left. What happened afterward was up to the Vietnamese people. We committed nine years of effort, millions of soldiers, nearly 60,000 dead and achieved a victory, however temporary. I always feel our troops are unjustly slighted when people say we lost that war.

—Larry F. Saum, Fort Wayne, Ind.



DOD IMAGE

Strikes Aided An Loc Battle

I read Philip C. Clarke's article with great interest ("Defying the Odds at An Loc," April). It is accurate, but he missed one major factor.

I was chief of Intelligence Production, HQ MACV from August 1971 to August 1972. Just before a major North Vietnamese attack on An Loc, my Strategic Targets Branch recommended a B-52 strike on the massed North Vietnamese units. Sixty-six B-52s were targeted on An Loc.

Best estimates were that 5,000 North Vietnamese were killed, but the figure could have been as high as 8,000. This attack completely destroyed the combat effectiveness of two NV divisions, the 5th and the 9th. One never reappeared and the other was off the Order of Battle lists for nine months.

—Retired Col. Leland B. Fair,
U.S. Army, Chillicothe, Mo.

Give the Devil No Ground

I read with great interest the comments of Rep. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, and Rep. Doug Bereuter, R-Neb. ("Should China Be in the World Trade Organization?" Big Issues, March). Although I've been a Republican all my life, I must side with Rep. Brown that China should not be allowed in the WTO.

The United States must get the dollar signs out of its eyes and stand up for



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If you're a man who uses nitrate drugs, never take VIAGRA—your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe level. With VIAGRA, the most common side effects are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. VIAGRA may also briefly cause bluish vision, sensitivity to light, or blurred vision. In the rare event of an erection lasting more than 4 hours, seek immediate medical help. Remember to protect yourself and your partner from sexually transmitted diseases.

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This summary contains important information about VIAGRA®. It is not meant to take the place of your doctor's instructions. Read this information carefully before you start taking VIAGRA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you do not understand any of this information or if you want to know more about VIAGRA. This medicine can help many men when it is used as prescribed by their doctors. However, VIAGRA is not for everyone. It is intended for use only by men who have a condition called erectile dysfunction. VIAGRA must never be used by men who are taking medicines that contain nitrates or of any kind. At any time, this includes nitroglycerin. If you take VIAGRA with any nitrate medicine your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe or life threatening level.

What is VIAGRA?

VIAGRA is a pill used to treat erectile dysfunction (impotence) in men. It can help many men who have erectile dysfunction get and keep an erection when they become sexually excited (stimulated).

You will not get an erection just by taking this medicine. VIAGRA helps a man with erectile dysfunction get an erection only when he is sexually excited.

How Sex Affects The Body

When a man is sexually excited, the penis rapidly fills with blood much faster than usual. The penis then expands and hardens. This is called an erection. After the man is done having sex, this extra blood flows out of the penis back into the body. The erection goes away. If an erection lasts for a long time (more than 6 hours), it can permanently damage your penis. You should call a doctor immediately if you have had a prolonged erection that lasts more than 4 hours.

Some conditions and medicines interfere with this natural erection process. The penis cannot fill with enough blood. The man cannot have an erection. This is called erectile dysfunction. It becomes a frequent problem.

During sex, a man's heart works harder. Therefore sexual activity may be advisable for people who have heart problems. Before you start any treatment for erectile dysfunction, ask your doctor if your heart is healthy enough to handle the extra strain of having sex. If you have chest pains, dizziness or nausea during sex, stop having sex and immediately tell your doctor you have had this problem.

How VIAGRA Works

VIAGRA enables many men with erectile dysfunction to respond to sexual stimulation. When a man is sexually excited, VIAGRA helps the penis fill with enough blood to cause an erection. After sex is over, the erection goes away.

VIAGRA Is Not For Everyone

As noted above (*How Sex Affects The Body*), ask your doctor if your heart is healthy enough for sexual activity.

If you take any medicines that contain nitrates—either regular or as needed—you should never take VIAGRA. If you take VIAGRA with any nitrate medicine or recreational drug containing nitrates, your blood pressure could suddenly drop to an unsafe level. You could get dizzy, faint, or even have a heart attack or stroke. Nitrates are found in many prescription medicines that are used to treat angina (chest pain due to heart disease) such as:

- nitroglycerin (sprays, ointments, creams, pastes or patches, and tablets that are swallowed or dissolved in the mouth)
- isosorbide mononitrate and isosorbide dinitrate (tablets that are swallowed, chewed, or dissolved in the mouth)

Nitrates are also found in recreational drugs such as amyl nitrite or nitrite ("poppers"). You are not sure if any of your medicines contain nitrates, or if you do not understand what nitrates are, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

VIAGRA is only for patients with erectile dysfunction. VIAGRA is not for newborns, children, or women. Do not let anyone else take your VIAGRA. VIAGRA must be used only under a doctor's supervision.

What VIAGRA Does Not Do

- VIAGRA does not cure erectile dysfunction. It is a treatment for erectile dysfunction.
- VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from getting sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV—the virus that causes AIDS.
- VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

What To Tell Your Doctor Before You Begin VIAGRA

Only your doctor can decide if VIAGRA is right for you. VIAGRA can cause mild, temporary lowering of your blood pressure. You will need to have a thorough medical exam to diagnose your erectile dysfunction and find out if you can safely take VIAGRA alone or with your other medicines. Your doctor should determine if your heart is healthy enough to handle the extra strain of having sex. Be sure to tell your doctor if you:

- have ever had any heart problems (e.g., angina, chest pain, heart failure, irregular heart beats, or heart attack)
- have ever had a stroke
- have low or high blood pressure
- have a rare inherited eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa
- have ever had any kidney problems

- have ever had any liver problems
- have ever had any blood problems, including sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- are allergic to sildenafil or any of the other ingredients of VIAGRA tablets
- have a deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or ever had an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- have stomach ulcers or any types of bleeding problems
- are taking any other medicines

VIAGRA and Other Medicines

Some medicines can change the way VIAGRA works. Tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking. Do not start or stop taking any medicines before checking with your doctor or pharmacist. This includes prescription and nonprescription medicines or remedies. Remember, VIAGRA should never be used with medicines that contain nitrates (see VIAGRA Is Not For Everyone). If you are taking a prostate inhibitor, your dose may be adjusted (please see *Finding the Right Dose For You*). VIAGRA should not be used with any other medical treatments that cause erections. These treatments include pills, medicines that are injected or inserted into the penis, implants or vacuum pumps.

Finding the Right Dose For You

VIAGRA comes in different doses (25 mg, 50 mg and 100 mg). If you do not get the results you expect, talk with your doctor. You and your doctor can determine the dose that works best for you.

- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor prescribes.
- If you think you need a larger dose of VIAGRA, check with your doctor.
- VIAGRA should not be taken more than once a day.

If you are older than age 65, or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg) of VIAGRA. If you are taking prostate inhibitors, such as for the treatment of HIV, your doctor may recommend a 25 mg dose and may limit you to a maximum single dose of 25 mg of VIAGRA in a 48 hour period.

How To Take VIAGRA

Take VIAGRA about one hour before you plan to have sex. Beginning in about 30 minutes and for up to 4 hours, VIAGRA can help you get an erection if you are sexually excited. If you take VIAGRA after a high-fat meal (such as a cheeseburger and french fries), the medicine may take a little longer to start working. VIAGRA can help you get an erection when you are sexually excited. You will not get an erection just by taking the pill.

Possible Side Effects

Like all medicines, VIAGRA can cause some side effects. These effects are usually mild to moderate and usually don't last longer than a few hours. Some of these side effects are more likely to occur with higher doses. The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, flushing of the face and upset stomach. Less common side effects that may occur are temporary changes in color vision (such as trouble seeing the difference between blue and green objects or having a blue ring to them), eyes being more sensitive to light, or blurred vision.

In rare instances, men have reported an erection that lasts many hours. You should call a doctor immediately if you ever have an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If not treated right away, permanent damage to your penis could occur (see *How Sex Affects The Body*).

Heart attack, irregular heart beats, and death have been reported rarely in men taking VIAGRA. Most, but not all, of these men had heart problems before taking this medicine. It is not possible to determine whether these events were directly related to VIAGRA.

VIAGRA may cause other side effects besides those listed on this sheet. If you want more information or develop any side effects or symptoms you are concerned about, call your doctor.

Accidental Overdose

In case of accidental overdose, call your doctor right away.

Storing VIAGRA

Keep VIAGRA out of the reach of children. Keep VIAGRA in its original container. Store at room temperature: 59°-68°F (15°-30°C).

For More Information on VIAGRA

VIAGRA is a prescription medicine used to treat erectile dysfunction. Only your doctor can decide if it is right for you. This sheet is only a summary. If you have any questions or want more information about VIAGRA, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, visit www.viagra.com, or call 1-888-4VIAGRA.

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VETVOICE

morality, integrity and honor. Not only did Chinese Gen. Xiong Guangkai threaten to incinerate Los Angeles with nuclear bombs in 1996, but it was also reported recently that the Chinese government threatened to kill 200 million U.S. citizens if we helped defend Taiwan.

In his eight years in office, President Clinton has provided the Chinese with the technology to carry out their threat. By the Grace of God we shouldn't give the devil any more ground.

—Retired Maj. Gregory L. Engman,
U.S. Army, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Taxes Are Skewed

The article "The Greedy Hand" by Amity Shlaes (April) struck a chord with me. Taxes are necessary, but something is badly skewed here.

My taxes this year will be approximately \$13,000. I receive retirement income from New York state, which is approximately \$13,000 per year, and I work about 25 hours each week.

In other words, my entire retirement income goes to taxes. This burden is overwhelming.

—Leo D. Dougherty, Topeka, Kan.

Samuel A. Minick

Honor Guard Homage

I'd like to express my most sincere gratitude to a Legion honor guard and its service to our area veterans. On March 11, I lost a good friend and uncle, Clarence Klecha. During the funeral, he was attended by the honor guard from American Legion Post 416, Greendale, Wis.

Clarence was in the Army during World War II in Europe with the 13th Armored Div. A veteran until the end, he still taught school children about his war experiences from his bedside in the nursing home where he lived.

The flag that was presented to us will fly proudly on holidays at the national cemetery at Wood, Wis.

—Gary J. Weber, Greenfield, Wis.

Correction

Editor's note: In the April issue, the article "Remembering the Forgotten War" incorrectly identified Ft. Devens, Mass., as Ft. Devlin. We apologize for the error.

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Flag Vote Upsets Constitutional Balance

By this time, most of you are painfully aware the U.S. Senate voted down the Flag Protection Amendment 63-37, four votes short of the required two-thirds majority needed to send it to the states for ratification.

The proposed amendment comprises just one simple sentence: "The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States." It easily gained the required majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, where it has passed three times, most recently June 24, 1999, by a vote of 305-124.

In the aftermath of the Senate's failure to pass the amendment, my feelings go beyond mere disappointment. I must admit that it seems we have lost much more than a vote in Congress. It seems that "we the people" and the states are losing control of our democratic republic.

I know this is a radical notion. However, if the Senate refuses to follow the will of the people on an issue so clear-cut, so broadly supported as the flag protection amendment, then is this really a republic? Is this really our government?

"Perhaps this defeat will serve as a wake-up call for America. Perhaps it will inspire us to fight harder. Perhaps it will prompt us to remind our Senators they work for us, not the other way around."

In the wake of this vote, I am not sure how to answer those questions.

In my view, the individual flag burner is not as much of a threat to our democracy as the belief, held by a minority of Senators, that an amendment supported by 49 states – every state except Vermont – and 80 percent of the American people, is not deserving of their approval.

It should come as no surprise that today

Americans are flocking to third parties or opting out of the political process altogether. It is votes like this one that force our neighbors to raise their hands in disgust or shrug their shoulders in indifference.

The very idea of representative democracy presupposes elected officials follow the will of the people. That did not occur in this instance. Senate staffs reported calls, letters and e-mails poured into their offices in support of this amendment. I was even told calls were running 100 percent in favor of the amendment in some offices.

This vote prolongs a quantum shift in the delicate balance of power that makes our democracy the envy of the world. It was the Supreme Court that triggered this shift in 1989, when it declared a Texas flag-protection law unconstitutional by a 5-4 vote. As Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., observed, "The Supreme Court's failure to act responsibly on this issue leaves us no other means to protect this symbol." So, while the Senate alone blocked the will of the people, it was not alone in ignoring the people.

I am deeply concerned that this sort of resistance to the will of the people could one day force Americans to convene a constitutional convention, which could radically alter our system of government. For that reason and many others, The American Legion would not advocate such a convention. But the fact that so many people feel helpless to impact their government should give us pause.

In spite of this, I have not lost hope. Perhaps this defeat will serve as a wake-up call for America. Perhaps it will inspire us to fight harder. Perhaps it will prompt us to remind our Senators they work for us, not the other way around.

A new day and a new Congress await us in the not-too-distant future. Proven public servants such as Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, Sen. Max Cleland, D-Ga., and a large bipartisan majority in both Houses of Congress will continue to stand with us.

So what can we do to help them?

We can continue to serve as a megaphone for the tens of millions of Amer-



National Commander Al Lance

Chase Studios

icans who believe the flag deserves to be protected.

We can use our own votes to break the stranglehold of the minority that is flouting the will of an entire nation.

And we can continue to educate others about the U.S. Flag – how it represents more than cloth and colors, how it leads us into battle, how it comforts us in afaraway land, how it embraces our fallen brothers and sisters, how it marks the resting place of heroes, how it leads us home with parades and pageantry and how it unites us like no other symbol.

I refuse to believe that fighting this battle was in vain. We have learned; we have grown; we have rallied a nation. As Sen. Hatch said just hours before the vote, "This is going to pass someday." When it does, it will be due to the dedication and perseverance of men and women like you. I am proud to be counted among your number.

This dark moment will pass, our flag will gain the protection it deserves, and the people will, once again, regain their rightful place in the balance of power under our constitutional government. Until then, we will not stand down. We will not go away. We will not surrender. We will continue this struggle until our federal government is put back into the balance envisioned by our Founding Fathers.





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JUVENILE
REHABILITATION



Convicted felon Brad Jack reads "Passport to Heaven" during his midday quiet hour – the only personal time during his 16-hour day.

Can military-style boot camps reform juvenile delinquents?

By Layne Cameron

Associate Editor

Photos by Tom Strattman

BOOTH CAMP. The two words are synonymous for a life-altering event. Veterans recall entering as brash youths and exiting as young men or women, matured with instilled purpose and direction. Stripping away life's clutter reveals a pristine base, which recruits rebuild to reach their maximum potential. Some juvenile justice officials believe that if the military could mold productive citizens, the same model could be applied to reform juvenile delinquents.

No Florida Vacation. For six months, Cornelius Akins will live a simple, purposeful life. All of his personal belongings fit snugly in a footlocker, tucked away in a spit-polished, Spartan 7- by 9-foot room. By design, the 18-year-old's day is designed to build a strong body and mind with each minute filled with exercise, school, religious worship, counseling and meals.

Midway through his stay at Florida's Manatee County Boot Camp, the convicted felon said his life is more stable than it has ever been. "Now that

"A boot camp is a place to receive counseling, physical education, religious training – all of those components must be there. You can't just have them march around carrying wooden rifles and expect to rehabilitate them."

– Capt. James Hallman,
Manatee County Sheriff's Office

I'm not smoking weed I can run, and I can think," said Akins. "I can see now that there was no future. This program has helped me step-by-step."

Few doubt Akins' ability to perform in such a controlled environment. But time will render the true verdict on his jailhouse confession. A national debate has arisen about whether graduates of juvenile delinquent boot camps apply these lessons once they are released. Are boot camps effective tools for reforming young criminals?



Manatee County Sheriff Charlie Wells believes they are. "We target those who have committed serious crimes and give them a final chance to make something of their lives," said Wells, who created the camp in 1993.

Shock Treatment. Akins knows this is his last chance and admits he has committed many crimes before a marijuana possession charge landed him in Florida's first boot camp. Manatee County deputies — each educated with 600 hours of special training — serve as drill instructors and mentors. The first week is designed to shock recruits and to keep them off balance. Drill instructors greet the van shuttling

fresh recruits by pounding on its doors and screaming at the boys. The young offenders are lined up, their heads are shaved, uniforms issued and individual rooms are assigned.

Within the razor-wire-strewn grounds midway through the program, the recruits harbor Boy Scout characteristics. They are physically fit from nearly three hours of daily exercise: calisthenics, running, marching and endless circuits through the confidence course. They remain morally straight, praying before each meal and attending regular counseling sessions and religious training. They also keep mentally awake while working in the classroom — many recruits study to complete their GEDs before



Above: Recruits are responsible for landscaping the boot camp grounds. Other responsibilities include building maintenance and cleaning, meal details and washing vehicles.

Left: Florida remains supportive of its juvenile delinquent boot camps — an effective tool for young offenders in the twilight of their youth.

their release. The immediate wrath of drill instructors acts as a strong reinforcement of these traits.

Outside the fence, though, the recruits – all convicted felons – lived less than Scout-like. The youths' rap sheets list aggravated assault, grand theft auto, burglary and dealing drugs. As reveille plays for their juvenile status, they hope to make the most of this last-stop program.

Now that Akins is an adult, he knows the next offense will land him in prison – a facility that will make the experience at Manatee County look like summer camp.

Integral Role. According to the American Correctional Association, Florida has the most boot camps in the country with eight. "Boot camps



Looking forward to seeing his newborn son helped Greg Brown stay focused through boot camp.

are an integral part of the corrections continuum," said Bill Bankhead, secretary of Florida's Department of Juvenile Justice. "We need to properly assess our delinquent youth and place them in a program that's going to be able to respond to the underlying cause of their delinquency. Some kids need a very structured environment that is rigorous and captures their attention."

Capt. James Hallman, commander of the Manatee County Sheriff's Office Juvenile Justice Division, agrees. "A boot camp is a place to receive counseling, physical education, religious training – all of those components must be there," said Hallman, a member of China Post 1. "You can't just have them march around carrying wooden rifles and expect to rehabilitate them."

Make no mistake, though, recruits at Manatee County do their fair share of marching and running. Drill instructors often run them five consecutive times through the confidence course. "If we don't push these kids and test them, they wouldn't be open to the counseling," noted Robert Bowden, Manatee County Boot Camp Director.



Reverence for Old Glory is instilled while Cornelius Akins and the other recruits raise and lower the flag each day.



The color of the hat marks an individual's progress through boot camp. Recruits are issued red caps upon arrival, then they move from green, to blue, and finally gold.

Bowden said television newscasts often show the drill instructors getting in the face of recruits, "but they don't show the two hours of counseling they get afterward." During the daily sessions, certified counselors address criminal thinking, impulse control, authority conflict, drug and alcohol relapse, peer influence and anger management.

Another crucial component of the Manatee program is its aftercare program. For three to four months after graduation, recruits are monitored as they are eased back into their communities.

Joshua Perry, course director of the Rehabilitation Instructors Training Course, Ft. McClellan, Ala., claims in an article that society has three options for juvenile rehabilitation: do nothing; throw them all in jail; or invest in programs to curb criminality and rehabilitate offenders.

Obviously, Florida has chosen the latter option. "We don't reach all the kids, but we reach some of them," said Bowden. "We give recruits the life tools they need to change their lives. They must, however, choose to use them."



Recruits stand at their doors and await the drill instructor's next order.

Article design: Holly K. Soria



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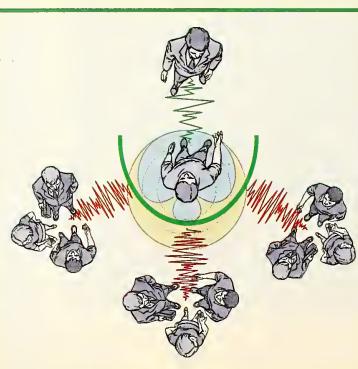
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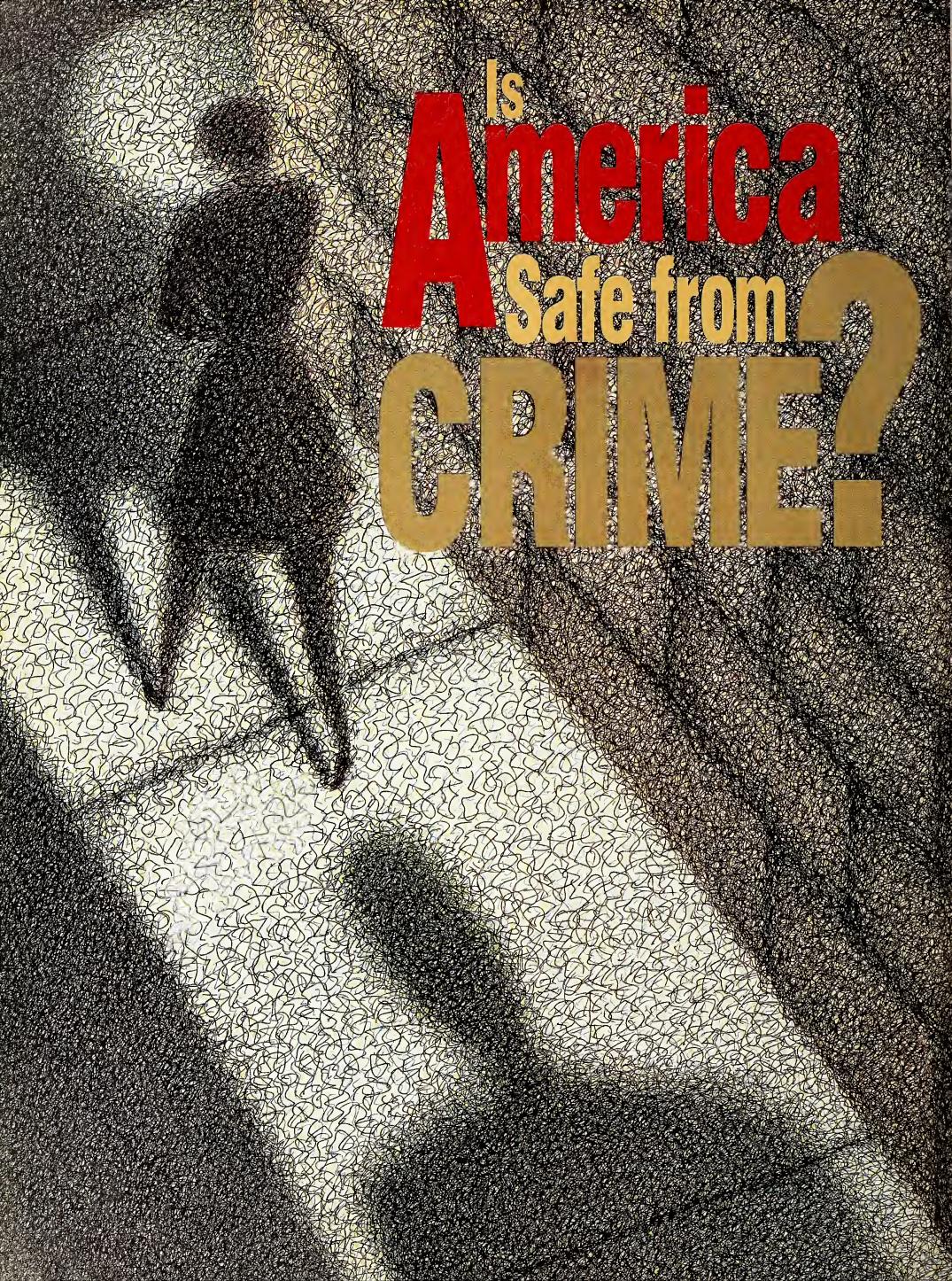
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Is America
Safe from
CRIME?

Violent crime is down, but juvenile offenders continue to plague America.

By Joe Arpaio
Sheriff, Maricopa County, Ariz.

HERE HAS BEEN much debate about crime in America and whether our society today is more violent than in years past. It's a logical debate, given that in almost any news broadcast, reporters hurriedly reiterate the latest studies on FBI crime figures. University professors or non-profit groups publish crime analyses ad nauseam detailing where, when and who is likely to be the next victim or suspect.

And of course, media being what it is today (half news, half entertainment), the emphasis is usually on the most alarming statistics available. Crime is down! Crime is up! Murder and rape are down! Juvenile violent crime skyrockets! The headlines beg for our attention. All of this goes to say that studies and news reports abound. Each says something different. Add them all up, and what we really have are many confused people.

Are we safer today than yesterday? Yes. No. Maybe. So I don't sound like a politician wavering on the issue, allow me to explain.

Yes, We Are Safer. With new laws and more law enforcement officers and deputies on the streets, more violent offenders are locked up and are staying locked up longer. Legislators have passed "three strikes" laws that force

"I am convinced that if parents took the job of raising children more seriously, juvenile crime would go down drastically."

criminals convicted on three different felonies to serve life sentences. This is good. Judges are responding to the law and to public outcry by sentencing violent offenders to longer sentences with stricter parole options. More beds are available for violent offenders as more prisons and jails are built. This is also good.

There are other likely reasons for the decrease in violent crime as well. Our nation is enjoying a time of peace and prosperity never seen before. There are more jobs and workers make more money. People have more disposable income and more opportunities to better themselves.

With the national unemployment rate hovering for the last few years near four percent, of course there would be less violent crime than in times when people were frustrated by a lack of work, food, opportunity and even hope. When hope is gone, crime spirals upward.

Demographics also play a part in the decrease in crime. There are fewer people under the age of 32 than in decades past. Crime is typically a pastime of youthful offenders. Our jails and prisons are filled with young men and women who, when convicted, are between the ages of 18 and 30.

Older people commit far fewer crimes, particularly violent crimes. We should enjoy the respite while we can, for soon enough a huge new generation of young people will come into adulthood. And when they do, unfortunately, the tide will likely change.

No, We're Not Safer. Juveniles are more out of control than ever. Whether from lack of parental guidance, the negative influence of the media or both, juveniles are too desensitized to violence.

When we adopt a lax attitude toward violence, committing it is no big deal. When a young person sees



Maricopa County inmates, part of Sheriff Joe Arpaio's female chain gang, pick up trash in Phoenix. Inmates also don traditional black and white striped uniforms, since Arpaio believes criminals should dress like criminals.

thousands of violent images on television throughout his or her early life, fiction mixes with reality. It is often difficult for a young mind to discern between the real and the unreal, the temporary and the permanent. In a haze, some children act out their horrible fantasies perhaps not fully comprehending the reality of the situation.

Don't get me wrong. I do not support a radical alteration of the media in America. The media is a business where decisions are made by the old rule of basic economics: supply and demand. Media moguls will continue to produce programming as long as we, as consumers, watch it.

Only when we decide a certain kind of program is inappropriate and stop watching it, will they stop producing it.

Instead, I suggest parents exercise better control over what their children watch on TV and in movies. Read and play games with them. Interact with them. We cannot allow television to do the babysitting. Nor can we look to our nation's teachers to parent our children. It is not their responsibility. They have a tough enough job properly teaching children with the limited resources available.

I am convinced that if parents took the job of raising children more seriously, juvenile crime would go down drastically. Parents must parent properly. Period.

We are not safer from crime as long as so many young people abuse drugs. This is a battle I have fought for 37 years, first as a director for the Drug Enforcement Administration and now as sheriff in a state known for its border drug problems. That fight has taken me around the world, and I still have no idea how to win this war. Our battle plans so far have not enjoyed many victories. Perhaps we must now turn more of our attention and dollars to rehabilitation and prevention and increase the numbers of treatment beds for the existing offenders.

Nor are we safer from crime in the

blossoming area of technology. The Internet is an incredible tool for learning and for commerce. Criminals know this and are quickly learning sophisticated ways of stealing via the web. We must labor to stay ahead of them by finding ways to secure the private information needed to make transactions via computer.

Improving Our Efforts. As law enforcement professionals, we are looking at the issues and willing to examine what we do right and what we can do better. We know people value their families' safety above all else, and we have risen to the occasion by hiring more police to protect our communities.

The courts are going through the same self-examination and are working at streamlining their overtaxed system so criminals can be tried and convicted more expeditiously. The prison industry is wisely looking ahead and building for the future so it can house more criminals instead of releasing them due to a lack of space.

And perhaps more importantly, the American people remain strong. We are a great and progressive society — one of the best the world has ever seen. There is still an abundance of goodness in our families and in our society as a whole. We must never forget that or let the media persuade us with a negative slant on things.

We must maintain our hope and optimism. Without that, we will surely sink into a deep abyss of despair. And as we know from history, despair can easily set in motion an upward spiral of crime.

As sheriff of one of the largest counties in the nation, I believe we must persevere and have faith that we are a people capable of unlimited greatness. We can make this country as great and as safe as we wish by working together for the greater good. □

Article design: Holly K. Soria



Craig Lourie



Lewis S. Slobow

Sheriff Arpaio works to reduce crime by working with the community and introducing innovative programs.

One Tough Sheriff

Since being elected as the Maricopa County, Ariz., sheriff in 1992, Joe Arpaio has introduced many unique programs to the Phoenix area. Dubbed "America's toughest sheriff" by the media, Arpaio believes inmates should not be coddled and jails should not be country clubs for convicts. Here are some of the initiatives that have brought the sheriff national notoriety:

Tent City — Created the nation's largest tent city for convicts, housing 1,200 inmates.

Chain Gangs — Resurrected the use of chain gangs in the Phoenix area, which has contributed thousands of hours of "free" labor to the community.

No Coddling for Criminals — Banned smoking and pornography, and limited television viewing in all area jails.

Hard Knocks High — Founded the accredited high school program for inmates.

Volunteer Posse — Cultivated a volunteer posse that has 3,200 members who help with search-and-rescues, the roundups of deadbeat parents and mall patrols during the holidays.

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SOUTH KOREAN GENERAL THANKS AMERICAN GIs

"If America had not become involved with this war, the Philippines and Japan would also be under the red flag of Communism today."

RETIRED SOUTH KOREAN Air Force Maj. Gen. Kim Dong Ho entered his country's air force academy after North Korea invaded the South in 1950. He didn't complete flight training until the war was nearly over. "Unfortunately or fortunately, I never had a chance to fly against the North Koreans," he said.

During his career, Kim flew the F-51 Mustang, the F-86F Sabre Jet, the F-5 Freedom Fighter and the F-4 Phantom. He is now vice president of the Korean Veterans Association and vice chairman of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee. Freelance writer Dan Allsup interviewed Kim for *The Ameri-*

Photo above: A Marine patrol moves to the outskirts of Chang Won village, South Korea, Aug. 4, 1950. U.S. Army photo

can Legion Magazine just before Kim presented several American veterans visiting Korea special medals honoring their Korean War service.

THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE: Were you surprised when North Korea invaded the South in June 1950?

MAJ. GEN. KIM: I was just out of high school, but I suppose some of us suspected North Korea would invade. After the South and the North separated in 1945, things were especially unstable in the South because of arguments over power. We had power struggles, but the North Koreans were already stable. They were under the control of the USSR, and the Communist Party there was so strong. They saw an opportunity and took it.

Q: Were you surprised that the United Nations and the United States responded so quickly after the invasion?

A: No. After World War II, the United Nations was still young and the American influence was very strong to keep peace in the world. I believe America had to get involved immediately to enforce the peace.

Q: How did you feel when the Americans became involved?

A: I was relieved. If America had not become involved in this war, the Philippines and Japan would also be under the red flag of Communism today. America had the primary responsibility to keep the worldwide peace. This is a superpower's responsibility.

Q: How would you describe your relationship with the American military people during the war?

A: I was a pilot, and the Korean military was modeled on the American system. We in the Korean Air Force became brothers with the American pilots. Our relationship was very good. There was no conflict at all. We talked together and we trained together very well. We were fellow professionals.



Maj. Gen. Kim Dong Ho.

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Q: When the war ended in 1953, did it end to your satisfaction?

A: No, of course not. Not at all. When the armistice was signed, it returned us to the same place we were when (the war) started. That's not exactly what we wanted. Why did we fight at all? We didn't win anything. If China had not been involved, the North and South would already be unified. But because China was involved and supported North Korea, we are still separate. In my opinion, if MacArthur had been listened to, we would today be unified. But Mr. Truman and Great Britain did not want to escalate the war.

"In my opinion, if MacArthur had been listened to, we would today be unified. But Mr. Truman and Great Britain did not want to escalate the war."

Q: Were you angry or bitter when the war ended the way it did?

A: No, not angry. But maybe disappointed. You must realize that Korea had no choice, because we are so small we had no power. How could we go against the United Nations and the United States?

Q: Do you think North and South Korea will unify some day?

A: I hope so. Every Korean – even those in the North – wants to be unified soon. But speaking for myself, I think it will be very difficult without support from the United States, Japan, China and Russia. If North Korea changes to a free market system, how will the Chi-

nese handle that? If China opens a free market and becomes a capitalistic system, then maybe, yes. Not until. Under these conditions, how can Korea unify? We will try and we will wish, but I think it will be a long time from now. In the meantime, we will stay alert and sustain our own power. Because communists can't accept any other system, that means they can at any time start another war. We must stay prepared for another invasion.

Q: Today there are about 38,000 American military personnel stationed in South Korea and some South Korean students are protesting their presence. Do you think the American presence should be greater or less?

A: If possible, we would like more, of course. Don't worry about a small number of young protesters.

Q: Do you have a message to the readers of *The American Legion Magazine*?

A: I would like to tell all American veterans – especially Korean War participants – that you fought for our freedom and for our nation. Korea is freedom's frontier. You are our friend always, please maintain our pure relationship. □

Article design: Doug Rollison



Stewart Rothman, a veteran who returned for the 50th anniversary of the war, receives a certificate honoring his service in the war from Maj. Gen. Kim. Rothman is from Fairbanks, Alaska.



Courtesy Maj. Gen. Kim Dong Ho

MAJ. GEN. KIM DONG HO – PROFILE OF A KOREAN ALLY

1931: Born Nov. 25.

1953: Graduated from Korean Air Force Academy in Chinhae.

1954: Attended U.S. Air Force Technical English Language School at Lackland AFB, Texas.

1964-66: Commanded the 112th Battalion, 11th Fighter Wing at Kimpo Air Base.

1969-70: Chief of Operations, 1st Fighter Wing, at Kwangju AFB.

1970-73: Korean Defense Attaché to the United Kingdom.

1971: Graduated from London University with a degree in air and space law.

1974: Deputy Commander of ROKAF Combat Air Command.

1975-76: Deputy and acting superintendent of the ROKAF Academy.

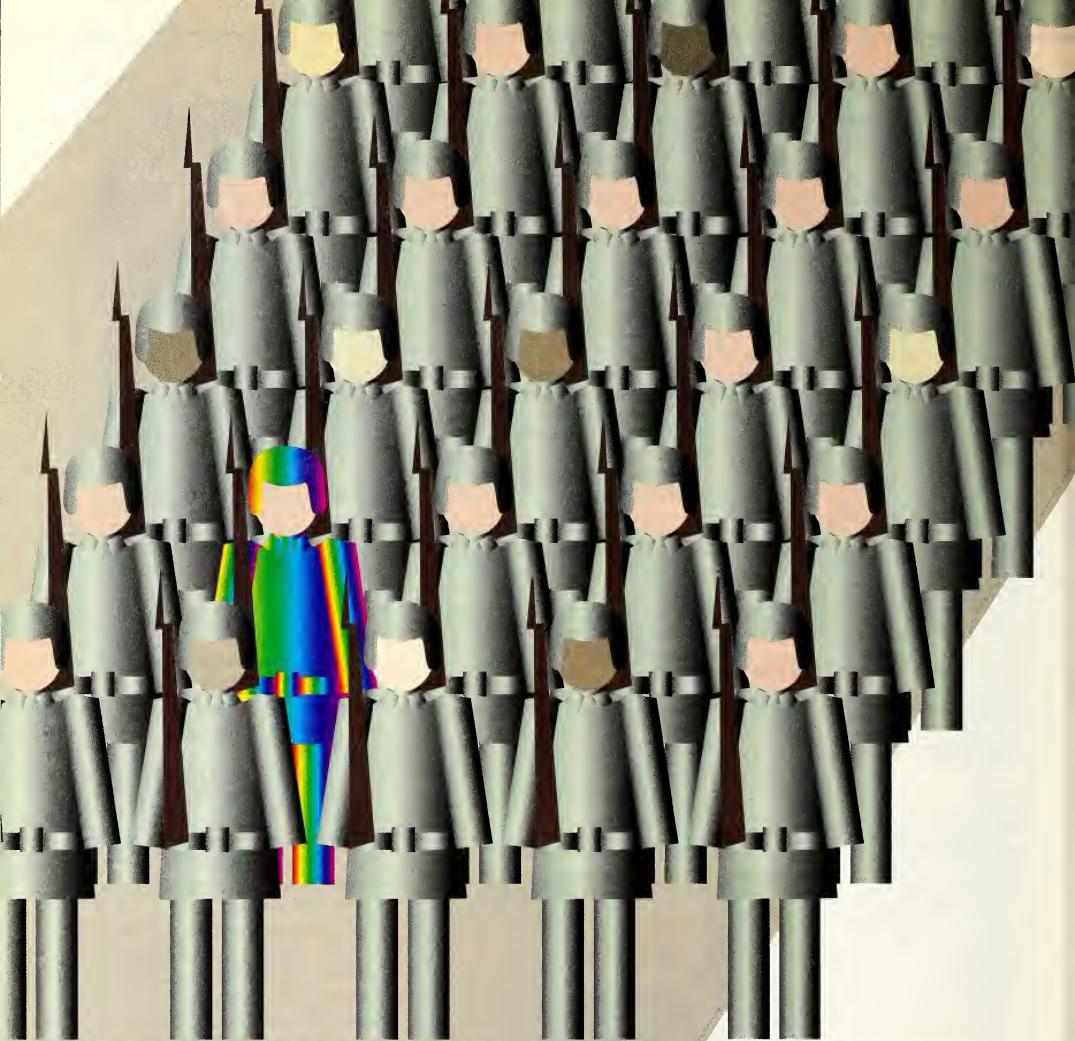
1979-81: Deputy chief of staff of the ROKAF.

1983-96: Advisor for the Business Strategic Intelligence Institution in Seoul.

1985-95: Chairman of the Korea Information Management Association.

1995-97: Secretary general of the Korean Veterans Association.

1998-Present: Board member and vice chairman of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee.



**THE PROBLEM WITH
GAYS in the MILITARY
BAN ENHANCES MILITARY READINESS**

By Fred Peck

AFTER RETURNING from Somalia in 1993, I testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee concerning President Clinton's proposal to lift the ban on homosexuals in the military. My appearance became even more emotional after I learned – just three days prior to my testimony – that the eldest of my sons was gay.

I supported the ban before I found out, I supported it the day I testified and I support it now. I base my opinion upon personal experience of more than 30 years of military service, not on the character or worth of individuals. I love my son, but I do not believe he or any avowed homosexual should serve in our armed forces.

The outgrowth of those hearings was codified in the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy on homosexuals in the military.

That policy reiterates Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution which grants Congress the power to raise and support armies, provide for and maintain a Navy, and to make rules for the governing and regulation of the land and naval forces.

That section also pointed out that "there is no constitutional right to serve in the armed forces," and that "the prohibition against homosexual conduct is a long-standing element of military law that continues to be necessary in the unique circumstances of military service."

UCMJ Crime. The policy's basic premise – that homosexuality is incompatible with military service – was not altered. Homosexual conduct remained a crime under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. The only change in policy was a nuance: that the military would not ask volunteers about their sexual orientation; and as long as they didn't tell anyone about their sexual orientation, they could, in theory, serve in the military as long as no one knew about it. In fact, nothing much had changed,

"Critics point to the previous ban against racial minorities serving and say the military should again lead the way. Gen. Colin Powell, the only African-American to serve as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, rejected that argument."

but the president was given a face-saving way out of a confrontation with Congress.

"Don't Ask, Don't Tell" was intellectually dishonest and detrimental to gays and lesbians who might join the military under the misconception that they were under no threat of punishment. However, in the realm of political compromises in Washington, it was a pol icy I could live with.

Why am I opposed to gays openly serving in the military? Fundamentally, it is an issue of privacy for those who serve. Military service entails enough sacrifices of personal privacy without

subjecting individuals to living in close quarters with persons of a different sexual orientation. I can find no solution for that aspect of the issue. I know of no college or university that will compel a person to share a dormitory room with a person of a different sexual orientation. Even if one did, a student always has the option of leaving that institution or living elsewhere. Conditions of military service do not provide those options.

Is it fair to discriminate against homosexuals who want to serve? Congress and the courts have long determined that military service is unique

and the military can discriminate against people based upon age, weight, height, physical or mental ability, vision, hearing and, to a certain extent, gender. The paramount reason for such discrimination is to ensure our military will prevail in combat. It is an issue of life and death.

Just Another Job? People who have never served in the military, would never serve, and who would actively discourage their children from serving want to treat military service as just another job. Advocates for lifting the ban offer no evidence that it would enhance our ability to fight and win, or even that it would be neutral to combat readiness.

They advocate the ban should be lifted because it is unfair. Life is unfair. Combat is even more unfair. Critics point to the previous ban against racial minorities serving and say the military should again lead the way. Gen. Colin Powell, the only African-American to serve as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, rejected that argument. Race says nothing about behavior, he pointed out, but sexual orientation is all about behavior.

Why invite people into an environment of minimal personal privacy and tempt them to behave in a manner which is their predilection, at the risk of serious punishment if they do? That's like going to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting to recruit bartenders. As one



Perry J. Watkins, pictured here in 1993, was an openly gay soldier who won a court ruling allowing him to retire with full honors. Watkins died at 47 from AIDS complications in 1996.



Vice President Al Gore speaks to Iowa students on the 2000 presidential campaign in January. He was criticized by military experts after promising to appoint only Joint Chiefs who supported lifting the ban on open homosexuals.

late-night show comedian quipped, "If the military lifts its ban on gays in the military, the Marines will have to change their recruiting slogan from 'We're Looking For A Few Good Men' to 'It's Raining Men.'"

Last year the president expressed amazement that nearly 1,100 personnel a year had been discharged over the past three years because of sexual orientation. He spoke of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy as if it were something foreign to him.

The Pentagon confirmed the numbers. More than 5,400 service members were discharged for homosexuality between 1994 and 1999. Frank Rush, assistant secretary of defense for Force Management and Policy, pointed out that 83.5 percent were due to "voluntary statements." In other words, no one asked; but they voluntarily told. Rush also noted that more than half of those admissions occurred during the first six months of their enlistments. A 1998 Pentagon study found that almost 60 percent occurred during the first year of enlistment.

"Can anyone argue that the presence of openly gay and lesbian service members would improve recruiting?"

Can it be that gays are entering military service under the false perception that "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" means toleration for homosexual conduct? Recruits are required to receive instruction on the punitive articles of the UCMJ during recruit training. What a shock it must be to them that homosexual conduct between consenting adults could result in being sent to a military prison. Could that be why so many of them opt out during the first six months of their service?

Wouldn't it be more ethical and less expensive to tell them from the outset that homosexuality is incompatible with military service and that homosexual conduct is a serious crime under the UCMJ?

Following the president's lead, Vice President Al Gore and former Sen. Bill



Former Navy Lt. Paul Thomasson speaks to reporters after an appeals court upheld his discharge in 1995 for declaring himself gay to his commander.

Bradley quickly came out for lifting the ban on gays in the military. The vice president even went so far as to say that he could use the issue as a litmus test for "those who wanted to serve on the Joint Chiefs to be in agreement with (lifting the ban)."

The president could order the Defense Department to allow openly gay and lesbian people to serve, but I do not believe he could order his subordinates to ignore the punitive article of the UCMJ making homosexual conduct a crime. A commander in chief cannot change the UCMJ. In fact, the UCMJ requires officers to report incidents in which they believe the UCMJ may have been violated. Simply put, conduct is punishable even if orientation is not.

The Recruiting Aspect. Lifting the ban on gays and lesbians would impact recruiting. Only the Marine Corps has been meeting its goals, and even the Corps admits it will have trouble in the year ahead. Can anyone argue that the presence of openly gay and lesbian service members would improve recruiting?

High school graduates whom the Marines seek might balk if they considered they might be sentencing themselves to four years in a gay bathhouse. Are parents ready to allow their children to be led into combat by a gay or lesbian platoon leader?

Anyone who has served in the military knows the power that individuals hold over their subordinates in training and operational environments. It is the power of life and death. Unit cohesion is often the difference between winning or losing, or living or dying. Can anyone argue that having a flagrantly gay

leader will enhance the survivability of that unit? In my considered opinion, the answer is "no."

Many major religious denominations in America will not ordain openly gay and lesbian clergy. If a large portion of our population does not support homosexuals in the role of counselor to their congregations, would they accept them as leaders and counselors of their children serving in the military?

Lifting the ban has great support in the news media, and from 20 years' experience in dealing with the media as a Marine Corps spokesman I'll tell you why. Almost every journalist knows and works with homosexuals every day in their newsrooms. Very few journalists have ever served in the military or know any of their peers who have served. That biases their reporting. To these journalists, most of whom grew up in the era of the all-volunteer force, the military is for the rejects — the people who went to the military as the employer of last resort. To them, being in the military is just taking advantage of another federal job program. They haven't a clue as to what military life entails. Don't expect that to change, except, unfortunately, for the worse.

If the ban were lifted, I told the Senate Armed Services Committee in 1993 they would have to write a very thick, new rulebook. It's hard enough to deal with a military population that is mainly between 18 and 22 years of age. It's a sea of raging hormones that leaders struggle each day to control. Sometimes leadership fails, as it did at the Army's Aberdeen, Md., training base where male instructors were preying upon vulnerable female recruits. Critics of the gay ban cite that as an example of why heterosexuals can't be trusted. Sometimes they can't; but at least you can separate the players without a score card.

I am not a homophobe; I'm just being practical. Real leaders have to deal with really tough issues. The problems they confront become even harder to deal with the closer they get to the sound of the guns. □



Fred Peck, a retired Marine colonel, served as a senior spokesman for Operation Restore Hope in Somalia.

Article design:
Doug Rollison

Courtesy of Peck

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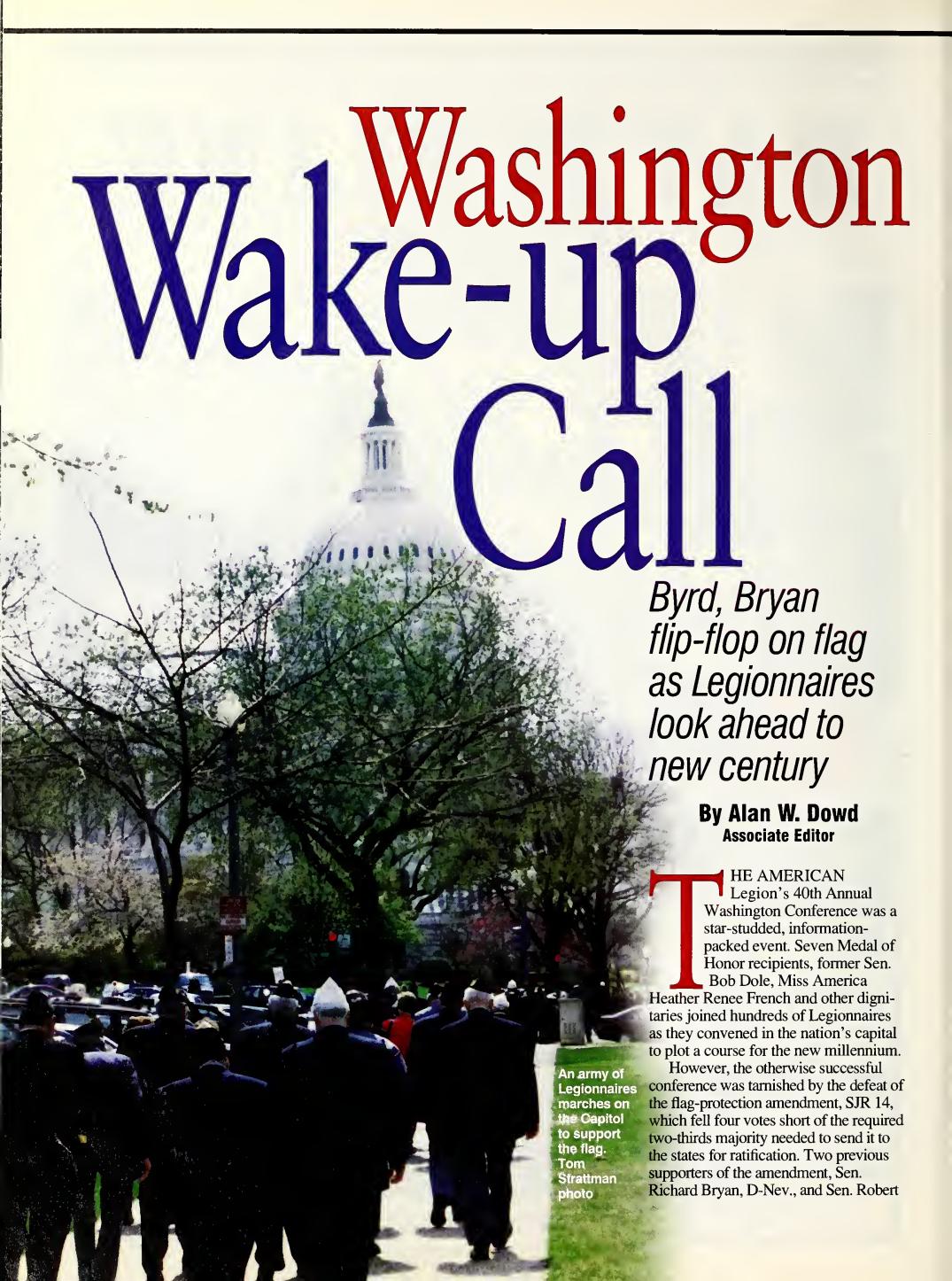
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Washington Wake-up Call



Byrd, Bryan flip-flop on flag as Legionnaires look ahead to new century

By Alan W. Dowd
Associate Editor

THE AMERICAN Legion's 40th Annual Washington Conference was a star-studded, information-packed event. Seven Medal of Honor recipients, former Sen. Bob Dole, Miss America Heather Renee French and other dignitaries joined hundreds of Legionnaires as they convened in the nation's capital to plot a course for the new millennium.

However, the otherwise successful conference was tarnished by the defeat of the flag-protection amendment, SJR 14, which fell four votes short of the required two-thirds majority needed to send it to the states for ratification. Two previous supporters of the amendment, Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., and Sen. Robert

An army of Legionnaires marches on the Capitol to support the flag.
Tom Stratman photo



Patrick Brady, center, receives applause from fellow Medal of Honor recipients Rodofo Hernandez, Raymond Murphy, Hiroshi Miyamura, Walter Ehlers, Robert Bush and Herschel Williams at the Legislative Rally.

Byrd, D-W.Va., turned their backs on Old Glory and switched their votes.

Calling the amendment's defeat a "wake-up call for America," National Commander Al Lance expressed hope that "it will inspire us to fight harder."

Byrd, appearing to receive the Legion's Distinguished Public Service Award, disclosed his decision to switch positions at the Legion's Legislative Rally. The rally was scheduled to coincide with the Senate's flag vote.

"I have changed my mind on this amendment because it is unenforceable," Byrd told the crowd. He added that he supported a statute, which even he conceded didn't protect the flag enough.

Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, also received the Legion's Distinguished Public Service Award during the rally. A longtime supporter of the flag amendment, Craig stood strong with the 80 percent of Americans who want to protect the flag. He called the flag "the fabric that holds us together."

Teaching Another Generation. Bob Dole, the national chairman of the World War II Memorial Campaign, was also at the rally, accepting a \$2.75 million check on behalf of the Legion family — just the first installment of the Legion's overall contribution.

"This memorial is not for us," said Dole, a decorated World War II combat veteran. "Twenty, 30 years from now, we want people to walk by this memorial and reflect on how there are times in this world when you have to fight or

die for something."

French also took the stage to honor America and its veterans. The daughter of a combat-disabled Vietnam veteran, French was awarded the 2000 American Legion National Public Relations

Award in recognition of her efforts to raise awareness of homeless veterans. She promised "to teach another generation to respect veterans."

Patrick Brady, a retired Army major general, led six other Medal of Honor recipients in speaking up for the flag amendment. Joining Brady were Walter Ehlers, Robert Bush, Hershel Williams, Rodofo Hernandez, Raymond

Murphy and Hiroshi Miyamura. "Soldiers look to symbols for comfort," Brady said. "No other symbol says you are not alone better than Old Glory."

Lance ended the emotion-filled morning by sending the troops off to the Senate for what he called "a final push in the flag battle."

"There are defining moments in life," Lance observed. "And today may be one of those moments. Your mission today is very important: You are the eyes and voices and ears of the veterans' community."

Galvanized by Byrd's disappointing vacillation, the Legionnaires marched to a Capitol Hill press conference given by senators supporting the amendment.



Miss America Heather French listens to Senate leaders defend the flag.



National Commander Al Lance salutes Old Glory at the legislative rally.

The throng of Legionnaires filled a large swath of the lawn just outside the Senate. As Legislative Commission Chairman John Brieden observed, "A lot of people were shocked by the number of folks we had there." Commander Lance later attributed the large turnout to Byrd's flip-flop.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, who spearheaded the flag amendment campaign in the Senate, predicted that its passage "will create a debate on national unity." Even so, he was realistic about the probable outcome, expressing concern that a handful of senators were "playing politics" with the issue. "The odds are against us. ... But this is going to pass someday," Hatch predicted.

Righting a Wrong. Countering those who see the flag-protection measure as an infringement on the First Amendment, Sen. Bob Smith, R-N.H., argued, "This is not about speech; it's about action; it's about doing something that's wrong."

Echoing Smith, Brady pointed to the crowd of veterans standing behind him and reminded the assembled press corps that "These men and women understand the importance of free speech. They fought for it."

The Legionnaires then visited their own senators to discuss the flag, VA funding, national security funding, veterans' health care and veterans' employment training.

Characteristic of the Legionnaires' candid but courteous comments were those of Past National Commander Clarence Bacon, who joined eight other Legionnaires from Maryland in visiting

the office of Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md. While Mikulski, who opposed the amendment, was not in the office, her staff was willing to hear the Legion's views. "We wanted to tell her how important this issue is to 80 percent of the American people," said Bacon. "We didn't come here to condemn her; we were just hoping she'd take another look at this."

As Legion delegations fanned out across the Senate side of the Capitol, debate over the flag-protection amendment progressed within the chambers, where a day earlier National Chaplain Bishop David Brown offered the mom-



Former Sen. Bob Dole, right, accepts a check for the World War II Memorial. National Commander Al Lance, SAL Commander Rick Cook and Auxiliary President Elizabeth Stewart present the check on behalf of the Legion family.

ing invocation.

Rising in opposition to the amendment, Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan, D-N.Y., called on his colleagues to stop "trivializing our most sacred document."

Fortunately, 63 of Moynihan's fellow senators didn't see the amendment as "trivial." Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., a strong supporter of the amendment, called the flag "the physical fabric of our society ... our monument in cloth."

The amendment was defeated on the final day of the conference.

POW-MIAs. The Washington Conference highlighted Breden's admonishment that The American Legion is "not a single-issue organization."

At the initial meeting of the POW-MIA Committee, Lance reported that some 8,100 veterans of the Korean War are unaccounted for, and more than 2,000 are still unaccounted for in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. He also noted that the processing and research facilities in Hawaii have improved. "But they still need 70 more staff to handle the workload," he reported. "We've raised that issue with the Department of Defense, but we haven't seen the rubber meet the road yet."

Ann Mills Griffiths, executive director of the National League of Families, criticized recent recovery efforts. "The last seven years have been the hardest since right after the end of the war," she admitted. Even so, "We're seeing increased seriousness out of the Vietnamese," she added.

Later in the week, Lt. Col. Frank Childress of Joint Task Force-Full Accounting, which searches for POW and MIA remains in Southeast Asia,

briefed Legionnaires on the ongoing recovery efforts in Vietnam and surrounding countries.

Childress noted that the number of unaccounted-for personnel is down from 2,583 immediately after the war to 2,029. "We hope that in the year 2000 we can bring that number under 2,000," said Childress.

Dr. Tim Castle, a professor at the U.S. Air Force's Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., applauded the brave work of the recovery teams, but he questioned the political will in Vietnam and even in Washington.

POW-MIA Committee Chairman and Past National Commander Bob Turner urged his committee and the entire Legion to remain vigilant on the MIA issue. "One veterans' organization is calling this a dead issue," he said. "But it's not dead until every family gets the answer it deserves."

Strengthened Bonds. National Adjutant Robert Spanogle and other Headquarters personnel briefed Department Adjutants on a wide range of issues.

Jack Querfeld, director of internal affairs, shared the highlights of the 1999 American Legion College program, which hosted 34 students from 31 different states. The program offers an intensive one-week seminar in leadership, communication, marketing, legal management and fundraising — all key skills for Post leaders.

According to Querfeld, the College seeks to "educate and develop future leaders in service to the veterans of today and tomorrow."

Past National Commander Butch Miller said The American Legion Col-

lege is a way to "leave a positive legacy to this organization." The next college is set for Nov. 12, 2000, and applications must be received by July 10.

Bill Harris of the Department of Defense briefed the Adjutants on the "Reconnect Program," which, in the words of Secretary of Defense William Cohen, aims "to strengthen and sustain the bond between America and its great military." The program is a response to concerns that the military is increasingly isolated and disconnected from the people it serves.

To correct this problem, the Pentagon is opening up its bases to veterans and encouraging veterans' groups to reach out to active-duty personnel.

Cohen, who addressed the meeting via a videotaped message, noted that "When it comes to America's military, the Legion is a bridge like no other."

For its part, the Legion is calling on its members to redouble their outreach efforts. As Spanogle said, "It's an opportunity to do what we do best. ... Spouses and children need our help. ... We can fix cars, mow lawns, even babysit." The nationwide information kickoff for the program is Armed Forces Day 2000.

VA&R Conference. The Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Conference,



Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., speaks out in favor of S.J.R. 14 to Legionnaires gathered on the Senate lawn.
Tom Strattman photo

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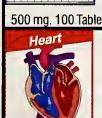
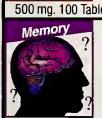
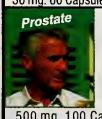
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headed by Thomas Cadmus of Michigan, included a pair of awards presentations. Ron Olk of Idaho was recognized for his work at the state veterans' home in Boise, and Chester Stellar – former chairman of the VA&R Commission – was honored for his lifetime service to veterans.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo West provided the VA&R Commission with an update on the VA budget. He detailed some of the largest increases in funding for veterans' programs in years. "And it's high time," West declared.

Among the highlights of the administration's proposed VA budget, West reported, are a \$1.35 billion increase in health-care spending and the construction of 63 new outpatient clinics, which should improve access to health care. Even so, West conceded that "we have a long way to go. It makes no sense that veterans have to wait for care. It's a waste of time at a time when veterans have precious little time to waste."

West proudly noted that four new national cemeteries are on the way. New cemeteries have already been opened in Chicago and Saratoga, N.Y. Two others will be opened this year in Dallas and Cleveland.

West also expressed his appreciation to the Legion for its GI Bill of Health and defense of the American Flag.

Shrinking Forces. Rep. Michael Bilirakis, R-Fla., spoke to a joint session of the National Security and Foreign Rela-

tions Commissions. Bilirakis, who joined the Legion in the early 1950s while he was serving in the Air Force, received a certificate of achievement for his work on active-duty and retired-military issues.

Bilirakis sounded an alarm over the shrinking number of veterans within Congress. "With every election, the number of members of Congress with military service declines," he observed. "It matters because fewer and fewer members understand the sacrifice of military service."

Bilirakis also expressed concern over shrinking defense budgets and rising deployments. "Not since before

"There are defining moments in life. And today may be one of those moments. Your mission today is very important: You are the eyes and voices and ears of the veterans' community."

– National Commander Al Lance

World War II has America devoted so little to defense."

He noted that the Army conducted just 11 operations during the Cold War, while it has been tasked with 45 in the last nine years alone.

In Bilirakis' view, all of this is contributing to a declining quality of life for service members. Bilirakis warns that inadequate pay is leaving many personnel with little or no disposable income, and lengthy deployments are straining military families like never before. As a result, according to Bilirakis, "The best of the best are getting out of the military."

Charlie Abell, a top aide to the Senate Armed Services Committee, echoed Bilirakis' concerns during a meeting of the Legislative Commission. Abell conceded that "readiness has suffered because of numerous deployments." He reminded the commission that many overseas deployments are open-ended, citing Bosnia and Kosovo as the most recent examples.

Abell concluded his remarks by praising America's men and women in uniform. "We hear incredible stories of 18- and 19-year-olds who face terrifying situations," he said. "But they stand firm. They look the enemy in the eye, and they don't back down."

As the Washington Conference illustrated, those are qualities most veterans possess.

Article design: Holly K. Soria



National Commander Al Lance rallies Legionnaires on the Senate lawn. Sens. Cleland, Smith, Hatch, Feinstein and Sessions, along with hundreds of Legionnaires and others, show their support for the flag amendment.
Tom Stratman photo

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Bikers stream into Cripple Creek, Colo., for the 12th Annual Recognition Ride honoring POWs and MIAs.

Taking Over Cripple Creek

POW/MIA Rally in the Colorado Rockies points to a new American Legion breed.

**By Peter B. Rose
Photos by Troy Maben**

JUST WHO IS THE BIKER? Is he a Hell's Angel, Brando in *The Wild Ones*, the counter-culture *Easy Rider*? Or is there a new element in the "Harley-Davidson culture" that pertains to The American Legion?

Biker leathers, vests, leggings, bandannas, derbies, stovepipes, baseball caps, cut-offs, T-shirts, boots, steel pots imprinted with skull-and-bones and one helicopter helmet. Ca-



POW-MIA flags and American Flags were the signature for those who participated in the Recognition Ride.

sual shades galore – brown, black, purple, raspberry and lemon glass; with many types of simple and flamboyant frames. Long flowing hair, braided hair, ponytails, mustaches, beards. Men, women and kids. Little American Flags and black POW/MIA flags attached to their "bikes," "hogs," "choppers" or "scooters," depending upon the rider's particular slang.

This costume party on wheels has assembled at Woodland Park, uphill from Colorado Springs and 25 miles north of Cripple Creek, the old mining town turned casino retreat lodged 9,400 feet high in Colorado's Rocky

Mountains. There are hundreds of bikers ready to roar.

The Governor's Harley. Ostensibly this is the 12th Annual Recognition Ride honoring prisoners of war and those missing in action. The featured speaker at Cripple Creek ceremonies is Ben "Nighthorse" Campbell, the Colorado senator and Korean War vet who staunchly supports present and past troops in Congress, and whose favorite means of transportation is his customized Harley-Davidson Softail. The nine color guard flags are topped by Old Glory and include The American Legion Department, District and Post flags.

As well as a remembrance, this ride illustrates a new awakening for the nation's largest patriotic organization that could be called "The Colorado Biker Breakthrough." Tony Jordan, who as National Commander was here in 1997, called it "Putting the vroom back into The American Legion."



Herb Davis, junior vice commander of the Colorado Department, consoles a biker after the POW/MIA ceremony.

Get to talking to bikers and you realize that many are veterans. One hundred thousand of them joined the "Rolling Thunder" procession from the West Coast to Washington, D.C., the "Run to the Wall" on Memorial Day 1999, according to Campbell. Your typical biker today is a solid, hard-working family person with a military

background or service relatives. In other words, an American Legion natural.

Now we are in Cripple Creek. Blocks of two- and three-story brick buildings trimmed by elaborate cornices and masonry handiwork occupy the slanted main run between conifered hills. Between 1890 and 1900 more than \$18 million in gold was mined here. More than 500 mines and 1,000 miles of tunnels stoked the rip-roaring economy. At the turn of the century 32,000 people including 35 of the nation's 100 millionaires lived here.

Ax Wielder Dumped. Cripple Creek had one of the largest and most notorious red light districts of the Old West. Abolitionist Kerry Nation called it a "foul cesspool," but the ax-wielding temperance crusader got a surprise when she tried to chop up a local saloon and the bartender knocked her silly and threw her onto the street. At different times, Jack Dempsey, Groucho Marx, Wilbur Wright, Poncho Villa, Lon Chaney and Lowell Thomas all lived, worked or hid out here. Today 14 casinos, including the Brass Ass, Virgin Mule and Midnight Rose, have brought back a dying tourism economy that has also been bolstered by open-pit mining in nearby Viktor.

Here come the bikers! The streets are closed off to all other vehicles. They are taking over the entire town. Streams of them, waves of them, knots and groups and bands of them, covering streets formerly "paved with gold":

Deep muffled whispers, snarls, howls, sharp metallic staccato, quaking vibration, rumbling, vroom, Vroom, VROOM! - throttled underneath as constant as ocean surf.

Motorcycles have been ridden as war machines. They filtered into enemy positions and served as riflemen's shields during World War II. Here they are jewels piloted by road warriors cherishing fallen war comrades. Is there anything more captivating than a throaty bike tricked up with lots of chrome and a beautiful paint job, a mechanical object that becomes a work of art?

Among their number in the honor guard are Scott Marciez, 30, Colorado District 4 president and member of American Legion Post 111 in Boulder,

riding a
'79
Harley
Sportster;
Mike Higgins, 35, of
American Legion
Post 38 in Security;
Paul Portman, president
of the District 7
American Legion Riders,
riding with his wife, Rita,
and son, Guy, 5; and John
Baugh, 52, of Post 38 in Security
and a past Department and
District 7 president.

Family-Oriented Riders. Baugh lost 11 relatives in Vietnam. "The ride is a way for me to remember," he says. "That's my drive. It's the reason I'm so active in The American Legion." Of The American Legion Riders, he says, "They're family oriented. Women as well as men hold positions, and young people are involved. We're not a motorcycle club. This is an organization under the umbrella of The American Legion."



Rita Portwood prepares son Guy, 5, for their motorcycle ride with husband and father Paul Portwood to Cripple Creek, Colo. They are members of The American Legion Bikers, which bring men, women and young people together in groups that are attached to posts.



A National Guard unit marches in the parade through downtown Cripple Creek.

Higgins reflects on his joining the Riders. "It makes me see what is going on. When I was in the Navy, from '83 to '87, nobody ever told me about The American Legion. My two brothers, who are 30 and 33, are getting ready to join. A lot of people don't understand what this organization does."

Rob Cox, state president of the American Legion Riders, says the program started in 1997 and now has 180 members in the Colorado Springs and Denver areas.

"The program is attracting members like you can't believe," says Herb Davis, junior vice commander of the Colorado Department. "The bikers' biggest fear is not being accepted — that they can't go to the Post; that they're not dressed the right way. Now they know they're welcome. And they've opened a lot of doors for us."

Higgins savors the receptions he and other Riders receive at the vets home in Florence, Colo. "When we ride in, people have smiles on their faces, which makes it worthwhile. Sometimes we'll have a barbecue with the vets and push them around in their wheelchairs. Then we put them on our bikes and take pictures."

Remembering Fallen Comrades. In Cripple Creek, wall-to-wall bikers fill and surround the city park for the Dedication and Memorial Ceremony. The Air Force "Wings of Blue" parachute jumpers open the program and a flyover by Colorado Air National Guard Huey helicopters closes it.

Speakers include The American Legion's Davis, who reads the POW/MIA remembrance service that features a small table, white table cloth, a rose, a red ribbon, a slice of lemon, sprinkled salt, an empty glass and chair, a candle and the American Flag; National Executive Committee-man Tom Bock, who urges that "we remind ourselves, our families, Congress and the president of the United States" to remember the POW and MIA issue; and Cox, who says "those who are here, welcome home; those who aren't, you are not forgotten."

Plenty of Activity. In 1998 the bikers built a memorial wall here; in 1999 they dedicated a 155mm howitzer in memory of Air Force Gen. James E. Hill. Hill helped arrange a flyover at the first POW/MIA rally at Cripple Creek. Events for the four-day rally and festival include a picnic, dancing, arm wrestling, Jell-O wrestling, cops vs. bikers football, tattoo competition, religious ceremonies, motorcycle rodeo and fireworks.

Rob Cox recalls that this ride began 12 years ago with 300 bikers out of Jim Wear's motorcycle shop in Colorado Springs. The second year there were 680 bikers and the number kept growing. Four years ago Cox was asked to take over, and he moved the ride to Cripple Creek. In 1998 1,100 bikers took part and 1999's figure hit 2,000, with half a dozen states, England and Canada accounted for. It is said to be the seventh largest biker event in the United States.

"The program is attracting members like you can't believe."

**— Herb Davis
Junior Vice Commander
of the Colorado
Department**

Cox foresees the same rise in The American Legion Rider interest throughout the country. The program, he says, "can bring in younger vets, which is important to the future of the organization." □



Ben "Nighthorse" Campbell, Colorado senator and Korean War vet, was the featured speaker at POW/MIA ceremonies. Campbell's favorite transportation is his Harley-Davidson Softail.

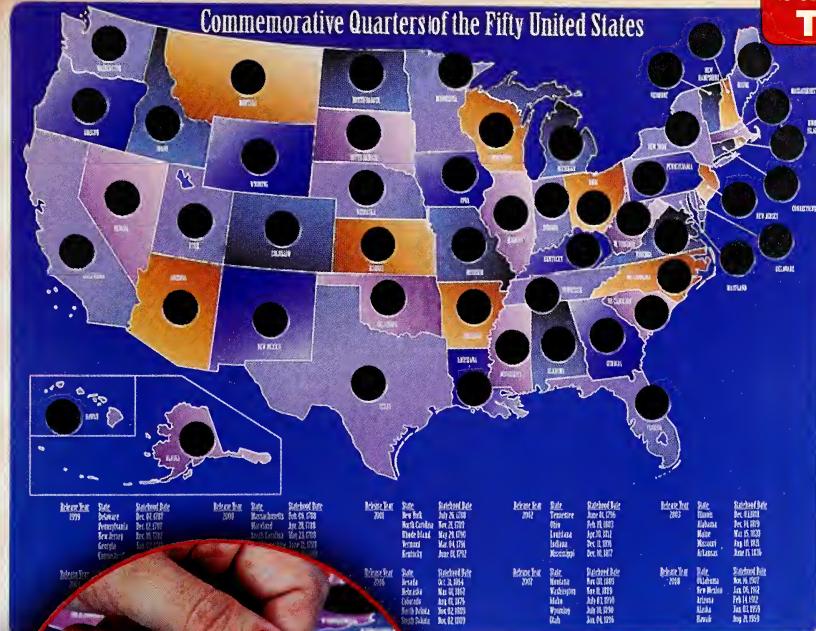
Editor's note: The theme for the 13th Annual Recognition Ride will be "Salute to American Vets." The event is scheduled for Aug. 17-21. For information, call Roy Box, president of The American Legion Riders, at 719-391-8929 or e-mail Rbox666@aol.com.

Article design: Doug Rollison

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Communist Coffee Perking

You'd better think twice about where that cup of coffee came from. Communist Vietnam is now the third-largest coffee-growing country in the world, behind Brazil and Colombia. The United States is the biggest customer of the Hanoi brand.

"The United States buys over 150 million pounds of Vietnamese coffee, and the money goes to the Hanoi regime," says Carl Olson of the organization, State Department Watch. But his survey of more than 200 coffee producers found no firm would admit to using the Vietnamese coffee. Some of the smaller companies said they don't use it, but the major firms would not say.

Olson says he intends to follow up with another survey asking the big brands to come clean. He also says, "We're going to Congress to find out how much coffee the United States government, including the Department of Defense, is buying from Vietnam."

Could this include VA hospitals? "Isn't it ironic that they may be buying millions of pounds of coffee for those injured during the Vietnam War and the money is going to Hanoi?" Olson asks.

Feds Blow Smoke on Suit

It's not your typical ad opposing the federal anti-tobacco campaign. This ad, sponsored by Business Civil Liberties, Inc., draws attention to the hypocrisy of the federal government suing the tobacco industry to recover Medicare expenses from smoking-related illnesses.

It points out, "The federal government provided free cigarettes to members of the armed services until 1974 – eight years after mandating health warnings be placed on cigarette packs. Yet, the federal government refuses to pay smoking related health claims by veterans." The American Legion has been lobbying the government to pay up. The ad was signed by 47 college and university professors and was addressed to Attorney General Janet Reno.

Green Ammo from the Reds

It sounded like a good idea: Make ammunition out of tungsten, rather



Saddam Hussein meets with Iraqi military leaders to discuss the U.N. Security Council's refusal to lift trade sanctions against Iraq.

Movement in Congress to Lift Sanctions Against Iraq

Seventy members of Congress, including House Minority Whip David Bonier, D-Mich., and Rep. Tom Campbell, R-Calif., have joined 11 Arab-American and Muslim organizations to call for the lifting of economic sanctions on Iraq. The group says sanctions are causing death and suffering for the people of that country.

But Dr. Patrick Clawson of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy says Iraq, under existing sanctions, can now export as much oil as it wants and is set to earn an estimated \$19 billion from oil exports in 2000. What's more, *The Washington Post* reports that two U.S. oil firms, Schlumberger Ltd. and Halliburton Co., have been helping rebuild Iraq's oil industry. Former CIA director John Deutch is on the Schlumberger board and Halliburton's CEO is Richard

Cheney, former Secretary of Defense.

"If we completely lifted the sanctions," Clawson says, "then Saddam would be free to spend the money on military-related industries, and he would find ways to divert funds into his military machine, no matter what restrictions would theoretically still be there. I suspect less money, therefore, would go toward food and medicine and humanitarian needs for the Iraqis. So the effect of lifting the sanctions would be a worse humanitarian situation in Iraq and a stronger Iraqi military."

Analyst Laurie Mylroie says opponents of sanctions "fail to understand we are still at war with Saddam Hussein. If you lift the sanctions, the money goes into Saddam's pocket and weapons for his next war against us."

—C.K.

than lead, a toxic substance, to protect the environment. Many indoor military ranges have already been closed because of lead contamination, and outdoor ranges could be next. Labeled "environmentally friendly ammunition," the green rounds are said to be similar in performance to the lead versions, and there's talk of making tank shells out

of tungsten. But Peyton Knight of the American Policy Center says the euphoria ignores a possible drawback: China has the world's largest reserves of tungsten, and the United States currently produces none. "Our military will be dependent on a potential enemy for our ammunition supply," he concludes.

—Cliff Kincaid

Should the United States have a flat tax?

Rep. Dick Armey, R-Texas



YES

One night a band of protesters risked life and limb as they crept aboard a ship called the "Beaver" in 1773. Why did they do it? To throw crates of tea from the ship into the harbor in protest over an unfair tax. The Boston Tea Party became a symbol of the freedom over which the American

Revolution was fought.

We need to work together to scrap the current tax code and replace it with a new system: a flat tax. The current tax code is broken. It cannot be fixed by tinkering or fine-tuning. It must be replaced.

My flat tax proposal would establish a tax code that is so simple most Americans could fill out their taxes on a form the size of a postcard. Individuals and businesses would pay one low 17-percent rate. The only income not taxed would be a generous personal deduction. For a family of four, the first \$36,800 would be exempt from tax.

Just as importantly, Americans are demanding fairness. In

fact, a recent Zogby poll showed that 75.5 percent of Republicans and 60 percent of Democrats looked favorably upon a flat tax on income.

A more transparent and honest tax code will help Americans decide if all of us

agree on spending priorities without dividing us into interest groups. A one-rate tax code will help all Americans decide if a tax increase is necessary without dividing us in class warfare. A lower tax on saving, working and investing will help prolong and increase the level of economic prosperity that industrious Americans have created by their genius and hard work.

Even with the thousands of lobbyists in Washington, Republicans in Congress have been taking steps to reduce the tax burden and provide greater fairness. We've passed marriage penalty relief and "death tax" relief. Both are good tax policy and a stepping stone toward real reform. In addition, we've repealed an outdated law that unfairly reduces social security benefits of seniors who work.

But we can do even better. Under a flat tax, not only would these unfair taxes be eliminated, but today's countless loopholes, brackets and regulations would be as well. We will have meaningful tax reform when America rises up and beats the special-interest lobbyists. Tax time is the time to ask your elected officials: "Do you support tax reform?" and before they answer, add, "I'll remember your answer on Election Day."

"We will have meaningful tax reform when America rises up and beats the special-interest lobbyists."

Rep. Julia Carson, D-Ind.



NO

Two early advocates called the flat tax "a tremendous boon to the economic elite." The richest taxpayers support it because their taxes would be reduced. But when we reduce the rate for some, we must raise it for others.

There are simply too few rich people to get the flat tax passed. They need to recruit others. To do that, they need another argument. "Simplify the tax code" is their cry. Flat tax advocates claim it would make tax preparation easier. However, most of the tax code and its complexity concerns deductions and exemptions. Eliminate them and our tax returns could be very short and simple, they say – a return on a postcard.

Remember 1986? Congress set out to simplify the tax code. They eliminated the ordinary taxpayers' deductions for interest on consumer purchases and sales taxes, increasing the tax bill for many Americans. Further "reform" can cost ordinary Americans even more. The home mortgage interest deduction; gifts to church or charity; state and local taxes – shouldn't they remain deductible?

The "flat" in flat tax simply refers to the rate: the idea that one size – one rate – fits all. Our idea that graduated tax rates are a good thing is based on proportionality – on differences in the ability to pay. Supporting this is the fact that another dollar added to a rich person's income makes less difference than another dollar added to the income of a poor person. That poor person's dollar is likely to be spent on necessities like better food or more medicine, while a rich person would likely use it to increase luxury living or raise a savings account balance. A dollar unspent does the economy little good. The concept of graduation is one that most other countries understand and use. The difference in rates and the use of deductions and exemptions for ordinary taxpayers help keep the burden proportional.

Some complain that the tax code is used for income redistribution, arguing that it is fundamentally fair to tax rich and poor the same. We are a society that shares in the costs of our country in proportion to our ability. Our individual tax burden is much smaller than those of other countries we consider civilized. The flat tax, though, redistributes wealth by redistributing the tax burden of the wealthiest taxpayers to the middle class and the poor.

The flat tax is, as the expression goes, "flat terrible." This is one "reform" America cannot afford.

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Are veterans getting VALUE from VA health care?

The National Field Service of The American Legion recently created a monitoring system to track the overall state of the VA system. The VA Local User Evaluation program, or VALUE, examines the care provided by VA based on five categories.

These categories – access, patient satisfaction, efficiency, organizational stability and quality – are the aspects that Legionnaires have stated are most important to them in their health-care system. Here's what the Legion reported:

Access. The American Legion examined the geographic availability of services and timeliness to get appointments in 16 of the 22 Veterans Integrated Service Networks during the past year and a half. All of the VISNs reported having specialty clinic appointments exceeding the 30-day standard established by VA.

"Access is hard to do on a national basis," said VA Undersecretary for Health Dr. Thomas Garthwaite. "We have work to do on waiting times in some clinics. We are hard at work on this, but we still need resources."

Patient Satisfaction. According to a recent poll, veterans are satisfied with the VA care and services they have received in the last three years.

The level of courtesy has seen the most remarkable improvement. The three largest sources of veteran dissatisfaction were access, coordination of care and pharmacy service. Specifically, veterans encountered difficulties



The American Legion's Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission has rated VA health care with mixed results.

with lost records, canceled appointments and delayed treatment. This problem persists in every VISN.

Efficiency. In the wake of no-growth annual appropriations, even networks that realized increased budgets over previous years experienced problems in meeting demand and in some cases performed worse. None of the networks were given increases equal to the rate of inflation. As such, The American Legion found a system that was being squeezed dry.

Stability. VA leaders have a firm grasp of the goals of the organization overall. However, this understanding varies by network and medical facility. VA's challenge is to continue to improve its services while its employees do more with less.

Quality. Certification and accreditation do not guarantee that errors cannot occur, only that when they do it is likely that they will be caught and fixed. With that in mind, of the 22 VISNs, only one had a problem with accreditation.

The Legion has found substantial evidence of VA's commitment to improved health care in recent years. The Legion sees quality as the cornerstone of VA and the real reason to protect the system for future generations of veterans and their families.

There are many opportunities for VA to increase health-care value in the coming years. VA must continue to improve the availability and timeliness of services. And despite higher ratings from veterans, VA still needs to improve coordination of care and pharmacy problems. According to Garthwaite, computerized patient records and the use of pharmaceutical bar codes would increase efficiency.

"Overall, the quality of care has improved remarkably over the past three years despite the flat-line budget," said Jacqueline Garrick, the Legion's deputy director of Health Care, National Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation Commission.

Editor's note: Copies of the report can be requested from: The American Legion, Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, 1608 K Street, Washington, DC 20006.

The American Legion Rates VA Health Care

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
|---------------------|-----------|------|------|------|
| Access | | | | ✓ |
| Satisfaction | | ✓ | | |
| Efficiency | | ✓ | | |
| Stability | | | ✓ | |
| Quality | ✓ | | | |

Korean War veterans can enroll in Navy Log

As part of its observance of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, the U.S. Navy Memorial is encouraging naval service personnel to enroll in the Navy Log.

The Log is an archive of 245,000 names of present and former Navy, Marine, Merchant Marine and Coast Guard personnel.

Anyone wishing to enroll should send the information above, along with a \$25 tax-deductible enrollment donation, to Navy Log Dept. Y2000, P.O. Box 96570, Washington, DC 20077-7685. A head-and-shoulders photo may be added for an additional \$25.



The new Florida Mobile Veteran's Service Center and its crew of volunteers travel throughout the state, providing medical care for homeless veterans.

Van rolls through Florida to help homeless veterans

The VA and the Volunteers of America of Florida recently unveiled a traveling medical and VA benefits service center that will visit hundreds of homeless encampments throughout Florida.

The \$311,000, 43-foot mobile home-style vehicle, opened Feb. 22 at the VA Medical Center in Miami. The vehicle is equipped with a complete dental office and medical exam room.

The vehicle travels with eight to 10

counselors and volunteers who offer food, clothing and medical assistance to homeless veterans.

Civil War-era cemeteries placed on National Register

VA Secretary Togo West announced Feb. 24 the completion of an initiative to list 59 national cemeteries in the National Register of Historic Places.

The cemeteries, all from the Civil War era, are located in 23 states. Two of the cemeteries — in San Antonio and Natchez, Miss. — were the most recent additions in 1999. In addition to their Civil War connection, the cemeteries are significant because they include the remains of veterans associated with every war and branch of service.

"VA is proud to have our cemeteries designated as national shrines and will ensure that these final resting places are maintained in a way that does honor to the men and women who are buried there," West said.



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Erle Cocke Jr. was youngest National Commander

Erle Cocke Jr., The American Legion's youngest serving National Commander, passed away April 23 at the age of 78. A retired brigadier general and World War II Army veteran, Cocke was active in the Legion throughout his life before succumbing to cancer at his home in Chevy Chase, Md.

Cocke's distinguished career of public service included a presidential appointment to serve as liaison to Gen. Douglas MacArthur, U.S. delegate to the United Nations and presidential consultant to the World Bank. Cocke served under Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

As a soldier, Cocke was twice captured by German soldiers and was severely wounded during the war.

Soon after the end of the war, Cocke served on the National Military Affairs Committee. In 1946, he became Vice Chairman of that committee, a position he held until 1948. Cocke rose to Department Vice Commander in 1946 and Department Membership Chairman in 1947 for the Department of Georgia. A year later,



Erle Cocke Jr. was elected National Commander in 1950.

he was elected Department Commander. "He was the youngest state Commander to serve in Georgia," notes Georgia Department Commander Charles Wessinger.

In 1948, Cocke was selected as Chairman of the National Security Commission, and when his term ended in 1950, he became the youngest National Comman-

der in history. He was just 29 years old.

With such a lifetime of service, it should come as no surprise that Wessinger remembers Cocke as "one of the most knowledgeable Legionnaires I ever met."

After his term as National Commander, Cocke devoted much of his Legion service to the National Overseas Graves Decoration Trust, where he served as a member, Vice Chairman and Chairman. He also served on the National Finance and National Public Relations Commissions. But according to Legion librarian Joseph Hovish, perhaps Cocke's favorite role was that of executive secretary for the Legion's surviving founders.

He is survived by his wife, Madelyn, his three daughters, Elsie, Jennifer and Carolyn, his sister, Aline Cofield, and six grandsons.

Cocke was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery April 27. The family requests that any memorial contributions be made to the American Cancer Society's pancreatic cancer research program, which can be contacted by calling 800-ACS-2345.

Past National Commander Roger Munson passes on

Past National Commander and World War II veteran Roger A. Munson of Mentor, Ohio, passed away from a massive stroke April 19 at the age of 74. "Ohio has suffered a tremendous loss," said Ohio Department Commander Ron Hartman. "I first met him while I was a District Commander and he was National Commander. He told me if I wanted to learn what the Legion stands for, I should continue to get more involved."

Hartman and many other Legionnaires took that advice to heart. One prominent Legionnaire has particularly distinct memories of Munson's term at the Legion's helm from 1992 to 1993. "He gave me my appointment as National Chairman of Children and Youth," said Elmer Fuhrhop, who still holds that position. "He was my mentor from day one. He always had a willing ear, always there to listen. I've been trying to emulate him ever since."

A Legionnaire for 52 years, his tenure at the national level began in 1962 when



PNC Roger A. Munson, shown here being named to the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame in 1996.

he was named to the National Distinguished Guests and Membership and Post Activities committees. His distinguished list of credentials thereafter placed him on a steady course toward becoming National Commander.

Some of the highlights included: National Security Commission Vice Chairman and Chairman, National Executive Committee Member, National Commission on Children and Youth Committee Member, Magazine Commission Member and Chairman of National Overseas Graves Decoration.

During Munson's acceptance speech, he compared his upcoming role of National Commander to that of a captain of a Navy vessel. "When I was in the Navy, I trained to be a deck officer, perhaps one day to command a ship on the high seas, and steer her safely through all kinds of weather and conditions," said Munson. "I never got the chance to do that, but now I liken that job to this one. ... There are rocks and shoals to be wary of that must be avoided. There are also fair winds and following seas ahead."

Munson is survived by his two sons, Bud and Jim, and daughter, Judith Schwanz. Condolences can be sent to the family at: 9321 Creekwood Drive, Mentor, OH 44060-6422.

Second half of Re-elect America tour cancelled

Dr. Balint Vazsonyi has cancelled the second half of the Re-elect America tour. Sponsored by the Potomac Foundation, the nationwide bus tour was visiting every state capital to promote a national discussion on the principles that have made America free and prosperous.

Vazsonyi will now devote his energies to production of a special documentary, which will have the same objectives as the tour and reach many more Americans than is physically possible in the course of a bus tour.

The tour visited Indianapolis April 12, an event hosted by the Indiana Department of The American Legion. During his visit, Vazsonyi expressed his firm conviction that "the principles that unite us are stronger than the issues which divide us."

After fleeing his native Hungary in 1956, Vazsonyi went on to become an accomplished historian, author, professor, concert pianist, entrepreneur and

now civic leader in America. Vazsonyi jokes that he's "still trying to figure out what to be when I grow up."

But if he's uncertain about his next vocation, there's no doubt in his mind about what makes America great – the rule of law, individual rights, security of property and a common identity. These comprise what Vazsonyi calls the "compass points" of the United States of America.

The Indianapolis tour stop opened on the steps of the state capitol building, where Gov. Frank O'Bannon and other local officials joined National Adjutant Robert Spanogle and Department Commander Richard Tonkel in applauding Vazsonyi for his work on behalf of America.

The tour's red-white-and-blue bus then headed to the Hudson Institute, which held an academic roundtable with Vazsonyi as its keynote speaker. Vazsonyi weighed in on the emotional issue of flag desecration at the Hudson

forum. "Saying and doing are not the same thing," he said. "The Supreme Court has no authority to declare that something people do is the same as something people say."

The civic activist finished the long day of events by leading a "We the People" Forum at the Indiana War Memorial. Representatives from the Indiana Civil Liberties Union, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Indiana University-Purdue University faculty joined Vazsonyi at the meeting.

National Adjutant Robert Spanogle expressed both disappointment and optimism upon learning that the tour had been canceled. "While it is regrettable that many Departments will not have the pleasure of working with this distinguished American," Spanogle said, "I have no doubt that each of you will continue to work to foster the goals of the Re-elect America tour."

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(SPECIAL) – Here's important news for anyone with diabetes. A remarkable book is now available that reveals a medically tested method that normalizes blood sugar naturally...and greatly improves the complications associated with diabetes. People report better vision, more energy, faster healing, regained feeling in their feet, as well as a reduction of various risk factors associated with other diseases.

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Members of St. Augustine, Fla., Post 194 and other volunteers pose with students participating in the Kid Safe Zone program.

Florida Legionnaires unveil 'Kid Safe Zone'

Every weekday afternoon, the sound of children's voices fill Florida Post 194's building. The St. Augustine's Kid Safe Zone, an after-school tutorial program, targets "at risk" elementary school students from broken homes and impoverished backgrounds.

Volunteers tutor children in kindergarten through fifth grade to help sharpen their math and reading skills. Post Commander Gregory White said he hopes to see similar Post programs nationwide.



Post Commander Larry Entler sets fire to a copy of the mortgage on the Post building as Post Finance Officer Rick Smith assists.

Anonymous donor pays bulk of Post's mortgage

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, members of Maryland's Post 256 no longer have to be concerned about their next mortgage payment. The balance has been paid in full, according to Post Commander Larry Entler.

Someone offered \$200,000 toward the mortgage on the Post's building — provided the members pay the remaining \$13,000.

After raising the final \$13,000, the Post held a traditional mortgage-burning party Feb. 12.

The vote for Old Glory — SJR 14

The Senate voted 63 to 37 for SJR 14, the flag-protection amendment, March 29. Despite lobbying efforts by the Legion, the resolution fell four votes short of the required two-thirds majority.

National Commander Al Lance

called the defeat a "wake-up call" for America and said it would inspire Legionnaires to fight harder.

"It is votes like this one that force our neighbors to raise their hands in disgust or shrug their shoulders in indifference," said Lance.

This chart indicates how senators voted on the bill.

| NAME | FINAL VOTE | KENTUCKY | NAME | FINAL VOTE | |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| (R) Jim Bunning | Yes | | (D) Kent Conrad | NO | |
| (R) Mitch McConnell | NU | | (D) Byron Dorgan | NO | |
| (R) Jeff Sessions | Yes | (D) John Breaux | Yes | (R) Mike DeWine | Yes |
| (R) Richard Shelby | Yes | (D) Mary Landrieu | Yes | (R) George Voinovich | Yes |
| (R) Frank Murkowski | Yes | (R) Susan Collins | Yes | (R) James Inhofe | Yes |
| (R) Ted Stevens | Yes | (R) Olympia Snowe | Yes | (R) Don Nickles | Yes |
| (R) Jon Kyl | Yes | (D) Barbara Mikulski | NO | (R) Gordon Smith | Yes |
| (R) John McCain | Yes | (D) Paul Sarbanes | NO | (D) Ron Wyden | NO |
| (R) Tim Hutchinson | Yes | (D) Edward Kennedy | NO | (R) Rick Santorum | Yes |
| (D) Blanche Lincoln | Yes | (D) John Kerry | NO | (R) Arlen Specter | Yes |
| (D) Barbara Boxer | NO | (R) Spencer Abraham | Yes | (R) Lincoln Chafee | NO |
| (D) Dianne Feinstein | Yes | (D) Carl Levin | NO | (D) Jack Reed | NO |
| (R) Wayne Allard | Yes | (R) Rod Grams | Yes | (D) Ernest Hollings | Yes |
| (R) Ben Nighthorse Campbell | Yes | (D) Paul Wellstone | NO | (R) Strom Thurmond | Yes |
| (D) Christopher Dodd | NO | (R) Thad Cochran | Yes | (D) Thomas Daschle | NO |
| (D) Joseph Lieberman | NO | (R) Trent Lott | Yes | (D) Tim Johnson | Yes |
| (D) Joseph Biden Jr. | NO | (R) John Ashcroft | Yes | (R) William Frist | Yes |
| (R) William Roth Jr. | Yes | (R) Christopher Bond | Yes | (R) Fred Thompson | Yes |
| (D) Bob Graham | Yes | (D) Max Baucus | Yes | (R) Robert Bennett | NO |
| (R) Connie Mack | Yes | (R) Conrad Burns | Yes | (R) Orrin Hatch | Yes |
| (D) Max Cleland | Yes | (R) Charles Hagel | Yes | (R) Phil Gramm | Yes |
| (R) Paul Coverdell | Yes | (D) Robert Kerrey | NO | (R) Kay Bailey Hutchison | Yes |
| (D) Daniel Akaka | NO | (D) Richard Bryan | NO | (R) James Jeffords | NO |
| (D) Daniel Inouye | NO | (D) Harry Reid | Yes | (D) Patrick Leahy | NO |
| (R) Larry Craig | Yes | (R) Judd Gregg | Yes | (R) Robert Byrd | NO |
| (R) Mike Crapo | Yes | (R) Bob Smith | Yes | (D) John Warner | Yes |
| (D) Richard Durbin | NO | (D) Frank Lautenberg | NO | (D) Charles Robb | NO |
| (R) Peter Fitzgerald | Yes | (D) Robert Torricelli | NO | (R) John Gorton | Yes |
| (D) Evan Bayh | Yes | (D) Jeff Bingaman | NO | (D) Patty Murray | NO |
| (R) Richard Lugar | Yes | (R) Pete Domenici | Yes | (D) Robert Byrd | NO |
| (R) Chuck Grassley | Yes | (D) Daniel Moynihan | NO | (D) John Rockefeller IV | Yes |
| (D) Tom Harkin | NO | (D) Charles Schumer | NO | (D) Russell Feingold | NO |
| (R) Sam Brownback | Yes | (D) John Edwards | NO | (D) Herb Kohl | NO |
| (R) Pat Roberts | Yes | (R) Jesse Helms | Yes | (R) Mike Enzi | Yes |
| | | | | (R) Craig Thomas | Yes |

Lockheed Martin charged on China information

U.S. defense giant Lockheed Martin violated the Arms Export Control Act in its dealings with the People's Republic of China, according to William Lowell, director of the State Department's office of defense trade controls. The alleged violations stem from Lockheed Martin's 1994 decision to provide technical documents to AsiaSat, a Hong Kong-based satellite developer. AsiaSat is partially controlled by one of the PRC's state-owned industries.

The Defense Department ordered Lockheed Martin to make "extensive redaction" of the documents sent to AsiaSat. But according to Lowell, Lockheed Martin "made no effort to retrieve" the documents and failed to inform the U.S. government that it had exported the information. Lowell alleges 30 separate violations of arms-control law.

If found guilty, Lockheed Martin could be forced to pay \$15 million in fines and give up its rights to government-contract work.

"This kind of activity, if substantiated, will most certainly have serious degrading effects on our national security," said John Petersen, the assistant director of The American Legion's national security-foreign relations division.

The State Department says the documents provided AsiaSat with critical information on how to correct failures in China's solid-fuel rocket motors. According to State Department spokesman James Rubin, "any assistance to China that enhances its capabilities in space launch has the potential to be applied to missile development."

Lockheed Martin has argued its actions were "reasonable and consistent with the Department of Commerce license" it had been granted to operate in China. "This is a dispute over interpretation of that license," said Lockheed Martin spokesman Jim Fetig. "National security was not harmed," Fetig observed.

The charges are just the latest in a series of cases involving technology or information transfers between U.S. industries and Beijing. Loral Space & Communications and Hughes Electronics are also under investigation by the Justice Department.

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Navy combat veterans eligible for ribbon

Navy and Marine Corps veterans who served in combat in or after World War II are now eligible to receive the Combat Action Ribbon. Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig recently authorized this award for those who served in combat but never received their CAR.

To be eligible for the CAR, veterans must have participated in ground or surface combat after Dec. 6, 1941, but before March 1, 1961, and cannot already have been recognized for the same participation.

More information is available from the Navy Awards Branch for settlement at: Chief of Naval Operations (N09B33), 2000 Navy Pentagon, Washington, DC 20350-2000.

Colorado revamps Oratorical Program

In an effort to ease confusion and spur participation, the Department of Colorado recently gave its Oratorical Program contest a facelift. Breaking with the traditional structure of tiered contests throughout the Post, county and/or District levels, the Department restructured the system to have one all-inclusive statewide bout.

"Under the previous arrangement, too much of the kids' time was being taken up, and it was difficult for teachers to keep up with the numerous contest dates," said Department Oratorical Chairman Ralph Bozella.

Bozella explained that in a predominantly rural state like Colorado, it was too difficult to control the quality of contests at the Post and District levels. He said the national model of bringing the contest to one site inspired him.



An artist's rendition of the Department of Ohio's new headquarters building exemplifies the construction going on around the Legion.

Courtesy Department of Ohio

Legion undergoing building boom

If new construction is an indicator of the health of an organization, The American Legion appears to be thriving. The proof is evident nationwide, as growing numbers of Department Headquarters and Posts can be found in various stages of building new facilities. The expense and efforts of such projects go beyond image — they reap a growing and vital membership.

One example of the building boom is North Carolina Post 26 in Manteo. The Post moved out of the local senior

center and into a new home in November. Although a parcel of land had been donated to the Legion more than 50 years ago, it wasn't until a survey was done on the property in 1997 that the project was started in earnest.

Post 26 Commander Bob Maher insists the true reward for his and the other members' labor will be evident in the days — and years — to come. "In the past few months, we've already added ten new members to our rolls. Our investment is already paying off."

Post responds for forgotten veteran

When a veteran's body lay unclaimed for almost a month, Legionnaires from Maryland's Gold Star Post 191 stepped up and took charge.

Parker V. Skipper, 78, died Jan. 24 and lay at the Maryland State Medical Examiner's office apparently with no family members available to put him to rest.

Legionnaire Nilo Vidi was concerned that Skipper, a World War II veteran and his friend of 30 years, would not receive a proper burial. Vidi contacted Post 191 to ask for help. Working with Post Service Officer Leroy Schwaderer and other Post members, Vidi and the other Leg-



Nilo Vidi is presented the flag that covered the casket of his friend Parker Skipper. Legionnaires arranged for Skipper's funeral. He was buried at the Garrison Forest Veteran's Cemetery, Owings Mills, Md., March 1 with the military honors due a fallen veteran.

Courtesy Post 191

Legion Posts registering voters must be nonpartisan

American Legion Posts planning to promote voter registration and conduct Get-Out-the-Vote programs must remain nonpartisan. Failure to do so could endanger a Post's non-profit status. This does not mean individual members can't be partisan. When partisanship is shown, it must not be associated with an American Legion Post and its voter registration and Get-Out-the-Vote efforts.

Federal election laws require that any registration drive conducted or sponsored by a corporation, labor union or trade association be nonpartisan. The Internal Revenue Code mandates the strict nonpartisanship of all such activities by organizations eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. The same rule applies to The American Legion because of the provisions in its federal charter.

A nonpartisan organization does not support, oppose or provide aid to any candidate for public office or to

any political party. In a nonpartisan drive, registration and voting assistance, information or materials must be offered and made available to all, regardless of which candidate or party they support.

Volunteers working on an Ameri-

can Legion-sponsored registration and voting drive should not wear campaign buttons or make their personal views about candidates, parties and issues known in any way while they are engaged in nonpartisan activities for their Posts.

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VETS® is a private veterans program that provides The American Legion with information about reunions, helps veterans locate old buddies and offers other special benefits and services to veterans and their families.

REUNION INFORMATION

This month we have listed many groups that are planning reunions. Information is provided free to Legion members and other veterans who write VETS and enclose the 5-digit VETS number of each reunion. VETS maintains reunion and contact information for more than 12,000 outfits. Reunion information is also available at no charge on the Internet at www.vets.org. Many libraries and schools will provide Internet access free for veterans with no Internet access or computer skills. We regret that due to call volume we cannot accept phone requests for reunion information. See "How to Use VETS Services" below.

OUTFIT ENROLLMENT IS FREE

Coordinators may list reunion information with VETS at no charge. Information may be submitted electronically via the VETS website or on official forms by writing VETS®. Individuals planning new reunions or offering themselves as points of contact for possible new reunions may also register at no charge.

THE NATIONAL VETS® ARCHIVES

The National VETS Archives is a free historical registry for veterans who want to be listed on the VETS roster for each outfit in which they served. Registration is free but to ensure accuracy, must be on official archive forms. Registration may be done electronically at the VETS Internet home page. VETS uses the archives to develop historical rosters and reunion contact information. Deceased veterans may be enrolled posthumously by a family member.

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#16268; 115th Station Hospital #20661; 13th
Airborne Div. #15383; 157th Inf. Rgt. #40006;
17th Airborne Div. #16619; 17th Signal Ops.
Bn. (WWII) #10395; 196th LIB Assn. (Ohio
Chap); 1st Cavalry Div. #20823; 1st Sig. Bde.
Vietnam #19422; 23rd Recon. Co. #23812;
280th FA Bn. (WWII) #22866; 2nd Chem.
Mortar Bn. #14861; 34th Engr. (C) Bn.
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Cavalry #23279; 45th Inf. Div. 279th Inf. Rgt.
#15902; 46th Signal Hwy. Const. Bn. #10944

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ARMY AIR CORPS

15th TCS (WWII) #22346; 38th Bomb Grp.

veterans get in touch with their outfit and buddies. Ann Landers and Dear Abby have shared our success with millions of their readers and now due to technology and demand, Finders/Seekers has moved to the Internet. A searchable list of our active files is available on the VETS home page. We encourage all veterans to check this registry to see if someone is trying to find them. Individuals who order Finders/Seekers will have their requests listed and also receive our free tips on how to locate missing veterans. Cost is a non-refundable \$15. Please do not send cash. We accept checks, money orders and MasterCard, Visa and Discover cards.

VETS® BENEFITS

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HOW TO USE VETS® SERVICES

To promote better accuracy and faster response, and except for reunion information requests, official VETS forms should be used to submit information or request other services. Forms are available free on the VETS website at www.vets.org or they may be obtained by writing VETS at P.O. Box 901, Columbia, MO 65205-0901 and enclosing a self-addressed, stamped #10 (long) reply envelope. VETS normally responds to all written requests the next business day. To keep costs low and still handle thousands of requests each week, VETS does not accept phone calls for reunion information. In an emergency, messages about other services may be left on the VETS voice mail system 24 hours a day at (573) 474-4444. You can also reach VETS via e-mail at admin@vets.org.

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COMRADES IN DISTRESS

Co. I 19th Inf. Regiment. Edward R. Souza is seeking witnesses to verify his frostbite in December 1953. 1423

IN SEARCH OF

Anyone who served with the orientation group USAF (AFOG) or bicentennial group in Dayton, Ohio, or Sacramento, Calif. contact Adam F. Kohler, PO Box 582, Limestone, ME 04750. Anyone who served aboard the USS *Biloxi* during World War II contact Frank R. Jones 4025 River Road, Theodore, AL 36582 or call 334-973-2882.

Anyone who was an instructor at Radio School, Scott Field, Ill., in 1946 contact Norbert Bohling, 7743 Taney, Pl., Merrillville, IN 46410. Anyone who served with Battery B 116th AAA

Gun Bn.. in WWII contact John M. Scalzo, 43 Mill Dam Rd., Smithtown, NY 11787. Anyone who sailed on the USS *Santa Isabel* Sept. 22, 1945, to Manilla, Spain, and then to 24 Replacement Depot contact Leo H. McClain, PO Box 866, High Ridge, MD 63049 or call 676-677-5117.

Anyone who was attached to or associated with Burtonwood AFB, Warrington, England, between 1942 and 1993 contact Richard Iwanowski, 4515 W. 55th St., Chicago, IL 60632 or call 773-767-1810.

Anyone who was in Class 12 in 1952 Infantry OCS, Ft. Benning, Ga. contact Mike Aidalia, 56 Colonial Cir., Buffalo, NY 14213. Anyone who served on the USS *Keith* DE-241 contact Omar Jackson, 302 E. Maple, Wentzville, MO 63385.

Anyone who served with the 1st Battalion 50th Infantry Mechanized contact Kenneth G. Riley, 200 Georgetown Ct., Hanover, PA 17331 or call 717-632-7604.

TAPS

Robert F. Marek, Dept. of Idaho. Dept. Cmdr. 1991-1992, Nat'l. Americanism Cncl. 1992-1994 and numerous Department positions 1987-1992.

Stuart N. Brenn, Dept. of Kansas. Dept. Cmdr.

1985-1986, Nat'l. Security Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1986-1993, Nat'l. Military Affairs Cmte. Memb. 1993-1999 and numerous Department positions 1981-1986.

Robert J. Artick, Dept. of Massachusetts. Nat'l. Distinguished Guests Cmte. Memb. 1981-1984, Nat'l. Security Cncl. Vice Chmn. 1985-2000.

P. George Ball, Dept. of Kansas. Dept. Cmdr. 1991-1992, Nat'l. Legislative Cncl. 1993-1994, Nat'l. Distinguished Guests Cmte. Vice Chmn. 1992-2000 and numerous Department positions 1990-1992.

Thomas Renfro Peden, Dept. of South Carolina. Nat'l. Distinguished Guests Cmte. Memb. 1947-1948, Nat'l. Marksmanship Cmte. Advisory Memb. 1950-1951, 1952-1953, Nat'l. Rehab. Cmssn. Area C Memb. 1953-1956, Nat'l. Membership & Post Activities Cmte. Memb. 1956-1957, 1958-1960, 1961-1963, Dept. Cmdr. 1963-1964, Nat'l. Graves Regis. & Memorial Cmte. Memb. 1964-1968, Nat'l. Cemetery Cmte. Memb. 1968-1988, Nat'l. Foreign Relations Cncl. 1988-1999 and numerous Department positions 1953-1996.

Harry A. Beagle, Dept. of Hawaii. Dept. Cmdr. 1976-1979, Nat'l. Legislative Cncl. Memb. 1979-1980, Alternate Nat'l. Executive Cmte. 1981-1983 and numerous Department positions 1975-1992.

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PARTING SHOTS



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Of Political Pedigrees

A congressman said to Horace Greeley, "I am a self-made man." Greeley replied, "That, sir, relieves the Almighty of a great responsibility."

— Henry O'Dorman

To Be a Football Hero

"I hear your son's on the high school football team," said the neighbor. "What position does he play?" "I'm not sure," said the boy's father, "but I think he's a drawback."

— Anonymous



"True, tantrums do take a lot out of you, but consider how effective they are as compared to, say, sulking."

All Work and No Play

The trouble with unemployment is that the minute you wake up in the morning you're on the job. — Slappy White

Should Have Stopped Earlier

Let me tell you something that we Israelis have against Moses. He took us 40 years through the desert in order to bring us to the one spot in the Middle East that has no oil!

— Golda Meir



"What do you think of our watchdog now, Margaret?"



"This woman on the call-in show must have some real bozo for a husband, Edna."

Parting Shots jokes wanted

The American Legion Magazine welcomes anecdotes, jokes or submissions for "Parting Shots." Submissions should include the name, hometown

and telephone number of the person submitting the material for verification. (\$25 will be paid for submissions that are published.) Send submissions to:

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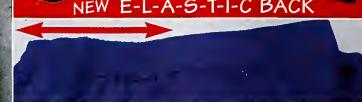
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